

162

But

RECTO READER

Excerpts from
the speeches of
Claro M. Recto

FRI., 30 OCTOBER 1981

To dear KUYA TOM,

I just want to wish you
loads of luck in your new
venture in the field of law.
You have been such a big
help and a dear friend in
my 3 month stint at our Bu.
XXIX. And I know that I'm
gonna miss you. All the same,
I'm glad that you'll be gi-
ving law practice a try.

Affectionately,
Maitee

Selected & Edited by Renato Constantino

table of contents

Foreword by Aurora R. Recto / page iii

Preface by Jesus G. Barrera / page iv

Acknowledgments by Ricardo Paras / page vi

Editor's Introduction by Renato Constantino / page vii

Nationalism, part one / page 1

Economic Independence, part two / page 30

Foreign Affairs, part three / page 65

Democracy and Civil Liberties, part four / page 113

The Constitution, part five / page 130

Philippine Politics, part six / page 140

Copyright 1965 by the Recto Memorial Foundation.
All rights reserved.

Published by the Recto Memorial Foundation
Printed by Regal Printing Co., Inc.
Manila, Philippines, 1965.

FOREWORD

Early in December, 1964, the Board of Trustees of the Recto Memorial Foundation decided to put out a book containing selected speeches of my husband of particular relevance to the present time. The Board decided unanimously to entrust the task of editing this volume to Mr. Renato Constantino, a close associate of my late husband.

Mr. Constantino accepted the responsibilities of editorship but doubted the possibility of completing the work in the time given him. He suggested the alternative of putting out a small volume containing excerpts from my husband's speeches and the Board accepted his proposal.

I have noted with gratification and pride the growing acceptance by our people of the nationalist ideals which Recto so passionately believed in. I hope that this book containing his nationalist thought will serve as an inspiration and a guide to our people whom he loved so well.

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to all the members of the Board of Trustees of the Recto Memorial Foundation whose friendship and loyalty to Claro M. Recto have made this book possible.

AURORA R. RECTO

PREFACE

Claro M. Recto was a living legend in his lifetime. Although a controversial figure, his brilliance, his patriotism, his greatness were recognized and appreciated by a great number of people, not limited to his countrymen. Even those who disagreed with him in some of his views, respected him. Death has but served to confirm his stature, even enhance it.

There is the risk though that the man of versatile gifts might receive less than his due if he were judged solely by his reputation however outstanding. Justice demands that he should be known for what in life he was, one of the towering intellects that our country has produced, and a citizen whose love for country was unexcelled. That only his works can truly reveal.

The Recto Reader then has a purpose to serve. Limited as it is in its scope — containing but selected excerpts on the salient features of his speeches and writings, — it introduces one to the workings of one of the most brilliant minds of our race, which reveal as nothing else can the true measure of Recto's worth and achievement.

It is that and more. It serves our country too, for it projects into the conscience of our people much that is to be learned from the creed of nationalism that Recto espoused with so much ability, sincerity, eloquence and courage. It is in this field that he, with those who believed with him, was much misunderstood and even at times maligned, for he was uncompromising in his advocacy of militant Filipinism. It is therefore gratifying to see that, like the shadow, as the years recede away, Recto's stature

as the Filipino nationalist of this century, grows in dimension, for even now, hardly four years after his death, the growing wave of nationalism permeating all spheres of our society, is already beginning to vindicate the position he has taken.

Thus, his message, valid as it was in his lifetime, is even more timely now. For there are still those among us, devoid of sufficient faith in our potentialities, who would in their attitude and thinking, in effect reject the gospel of national dignity, national pride, and the national responsibility of self-reliance. The words of Claro M. Recto may, it is fervently hoped, occasion a change of mind and change of heart.

His views on nationalism, on economic independence, on foreign affairs, on democracy and civil liberties, on the Constitution and on politics in our country possess enduring qualities. Rooted as they are on the realities of the situation, stressing as they do the primacy of reason, and motivated by a passionate dedication to one's country and one's people, they possess the quality of permanence.

To drink deep then of the Recto Reader is a rich and rewarding experience. We must avail ourselves of this privilege and must express our gratitude to the Recto Foundation for its publication.

Moreover, not the least of its beguiling features is the opportunity vouchsafed to enjoy once again the profundity of thought, the elegance of language, and the deathless prose of the one and only Claro M. Recto.

JESUS G. BARRERA

Manila, March 3, 1965.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Recto Reader is the first publication of the Recto Memorial Foundation. It is the beginning of a series of books which the Foundation hopes to publish to preserve the ideas of Claro M. Recto for posterity.

This initial project would not have seen fulfillment were it not for the painstaking work of its editor, Mr. Renato Constantino. Mr. Augusto Cinco and Mr. Ricardo Binay of the Recto Memorial Foundation typed the early drafts, Miss Benilda Lachica typed the manuscript in its final form. Mr. Andres Cristobal Cruz assisted in going over the proofs. Mrs. Letizia R. Constantino provided general assistance from the initial to the final stage of the work.

Mr. Mauro Malang Santos was responsible for the book design. To all of them, the Recto Memorial Foundation is deeply grateful.

RICARDO PARAS
Chairman, Board of Trustees
Recto Memorial Foundation

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Claro M. Recto was a brilliant man, a complex man whose incisive mind was at home in many fields of human knowledge. His literary works, his speeches and statements, the large body of writings which he left behind constitute a rich mine of ideas. To do justice to the richness and variety of his thoughts and to produce a book worthy of the man would require much more than the limited time given me.

Instead of attempting a book of Recto's speeches, which I know would have to be done haphazardly if my deadline were to be met, I suggested a small volume of excerpts from these speeches to serve as a preliminary sampling of his ideas, a sort of introduction to Recto. However, after I had gone through the first hundred speeches (practically all of them postwar as the Recto Memorial Board had suggested) and marked the passages that could be excerpted, I realized that I had much more than a miscellany of quotable quotes.

I had known Recto to be that rare breed of politician — one with a definite, an integrated view of Philippine society and Philippine problems. His speeches brought out more forcefully than ever the consistency of his views, especially during the last decade of his life, for it was then that his life-long devotion to his country and people crystallized into his well-thought out and comprehensive nationalist credo. Whether he spoke on Philippine literature, history, economics, politics, Philippine-American relations, or foreign policy, his views on particular issues and events were securely based on his creed of nationalism.

Bearing in mind the instruction of the Board of Trustees of the Recto Memorial Foundation on the original project — that the speeches chosen should be those of particular relevance to the present — and remembering that prior to his ill-fated trip abroad, Don Claro had spoken to me a number of times of his plans to put out a book presenting his nationalist views in a systematic manner, I realized that a random sampling on many different subjects would be a disservice to him. I decided, therefore, to attempt a more organized presentation of his ideas, limiting myself to the six areas for which he was best known in his public life: nationalism, economic independence, foreign policy, democracy and civil liberties, the Constitution, and Philippine politics, leaving his beautiful Spanish prose, his romantic poetry and other writings for other editors, other books.

Although I am not presenting here the complete Recto, I feel that there are enough excerpts to give readers a fairly comprehensive view of Recto, the Nationalist, which is how he would wish to be remembered, because he had often expressed his belief that it was in espousing the cause of nationalism that he had rendered his most valuable service to his country and people.

The Recto Reader aims to introduce in systematic form the basic ideas and teachings of Recto. It may be called a "Short Course on Recto" because it presents his position on the basic questions of his time. Under the six broad subjects chosen, excerpts from his speeches are organized in as orderly a manner as possible so that each section contains Recto's thinking on various aspects of a particular subject. Although this was the only practical method of presenting his views, it often gave rise to almost insuperable difficulties. First, these areas are naturally inter-related; second, Recto was a very thorough man and he discussed all the ramifications of his subject so that,

for example, a speech on economic independence could also contain valuable ideas on civil liberties; and third, he went back to his principal thesis in speech after speech although his treatment was always different. The dismemberment of speeches became, for the foregoing reasons, inevitable. Thus, several excerpts from the same speech may be found in the same section and also in different sections. Care was taken, however, not to distort but to preserve the original meaning of each passage excerpted, for the purpose of this volume is not to interpret Recto but to let him speak to his readers as in life he spoke to his countrymen. My work, as I saw it, was merely to arrange the presentation of his ideas for the convenience of the reader. As a further aid, I provided, under six broad divisions, subheads which summarize the idea of each section.

The contemporary appeal of his ideas and of his solutions to national problems despite the fact that these were written more than five years ago (some more than ten years ago) proves that conditions have not changed since the time he expounded these ideas. This makes him well worth reading now. Though many of the passages in his speeches have surprising validity for the present, Recto was no ivory tower philosopher dreaming of future societies. He was a battler in the political arena of his own time and therefore it has not been possible entirely to avoid passages referring to individuals against whom he directed some of his more polemical speeches. Whenever the same basic idea was expressed more than once, however, I chose the less polemical passage.

Whenever necessary, I have provided short footnotes to clarify references to people, administrations, or events. I have not had enough time to put in as many footnotes as I would have wished; however, the date of delivery of the speech from which the particular passage was excerpted is often enough to guide the reader to the back-

ground of events necessary for a full understanding of the passage.

Some of the ideas expressed in this book may seem trite to the reader. Have not many others expressed the same thought? If the reader will consult the date when a particular idea was first expressed, he will invariably find that what others are saying now was said by Recto years ago when it was not safe to say it, when it took courage to say it, when he suffered calumny and abuse because he said it.

The Board of Trustees of the Recto Memorial Foundation decided to publish a Recto volume not only out of a desire to perpetuate his memory but also because it believes that Recto's ideas could still be of service to his people. It is my hope that this volume will be only the beginning of a growing Rectoana, for Recto still has much to say to his countrymen and his ideas are too valuable to remain unread in the archives of the Recto museum.

RENATO CONSTANTINO

January, 1965



I place in your hands, . . . this
message . . . from one whose
only authority is a firm
conviction and a lifelong
experience, and who, in his
declining years, still loves to
plant trees knowing that he will
never sit in their shade, happy
in the thought with *Tasio, the
Philosopher*, that some day, in a
distant future, one may say
of him and the nationalists of his
generation: "There were
those who kept vigil in the night
of our forefathers." (No todos
dormian en la noche de nuestros
abuelos.)

PART ONE

NATIONALISM

Filipinism, nationalism: this is my unconquerable faith and my burning hope. . . . It is the one logical and courageous answer of Filipino patriotism to all the plots and designs to keep our people forever subservient to foreign interests. It is a banner of freedom proclaiming the national interests of the people, to be promoted and safeguarded by themselves, so that the fruits of their efforts and the wealth derived from their God-given resources shall, at long last, accrue to them and thus enable all of our people to rise above poverty and march on to prosperity, contentment, and dignity.

A Filipinism crusade is long overdue. I have, in all humility and with dedicated love of country and countrymen, undertaken to lead it. I am confident that our people will rally behind it. As long as there is an ounce of breath in me, I shall never fold the banner of this crusade. So help me God.'

' Filipinism and the Coming Elections, August 10, 1957.

Basic Components Of Nationalism

What are the basic components of nationalism? One is the growing and deepening consciousness that we are a distinct people with our own character and spirit, our own customs and traditions, our own ideals, our own way of thinking, our own way of life. What sets us apart as a people distinct from any other are the experiences and vicissitudes we have gone through together as a nation in our own environment. A Filipino cannot assert this identity and call himself a nationalist unless he is one with his people's history and has enshrined in his heart the precepts and examples of our heroes and martyrs.

A firm belief in the genius of our race and in the capacity of the people for advancement toward the attainment of their destiny is another basic component of nationalism. But this belief can be acquired only through an understanding of their struggles and accomplishments, their trials and tribulations, the sum total of their experiences since the dawn of their history.²

* * * *

I do not use nationalism in its narrow, partisan sense but in its whole scope, nationalism as the love and devotion to all that is ours, to all that is of this land which was the land of our forefathers and will still be, if we are vigilant, the land of our children and our children's children.³

* * * *

If, according to Webster, "nationalism" and "patriotism" are synonymous, then, to be a patriot is to be a nationalist, and vice versa.

² Nationalism and Our Historic Past, February 27, 1960.

³ Benigno S. Aquino (Funeral Oration), December 29, 1947.

It is for this reason that I do not believe in qualifying "nationalism" with such restrictive adjectives as "positive" and "balanced." To dilute nationalism thus would be like emasculating "patriotism."⁴

* * * *

We, the nationalists of today, are fortunate that we can profit from our own past and the unforgettable examples of heroism, self-sacrifice, tenacity, and courage, in the face of tremendous odds, of our people and their nationalist leaders in that finest hour⁵ of our history. Nationalism is nourished by a sense of history. It is of its essence to know profoundly the past, so that we may be in complete oneness with the men who made that history and in intimate communion with their thoughts, their deeds, and their noble lives. The study of our nation's history with its nationalistic tenets is, therefore, an inescapable duty and necessity in this formative period of our Republic.⁶

Nationalism As A Vital Force

The battle-cry that animates and sets in motion millions of hearts and minds is nationalism. It is not a passing emotion, not a naive longing for the trappings of sovereignty. It is persevering, militant, and mature. Its militancy is evident in its determination to correct the wrongs of the past, to effect changes that shall place the political, economic, and cultural life of peoples under their own forging and control. It connotes perseverance because it is consubstantial and, as such, coeval with country and people. Its maturity may be perceived in its refusal to accept form for substance, illusion for reality. In Africa, for example, where the nationalist movement is comparatively new, people will no longer acquiesce in political

⁴ Economic Nationalism, March 28, 1957.

⁵ The Philippine Revolution of 1896.

⁶ Nationalism and Our Historic Past, February 27, 1960.

sovereignty without economic independence, for they know too well that the first without the second is hollow, if not meaningless.⁷

* * * *

If nationalism, that is, national self-determination, and democracy were the two mighty forces in the Western World during the last century, they are likewise the same two mighty forces in the whole of Asia and Africa today.⁸

* * * *

During the last decade, American policy chose to ignore the nationalism of Africa and Asia. But nationalism became too powerful a force to ignore, and, only a few months ago, President Eisenhower at long last had to admit that nationalism is the strongest force in Asia and Africa today. Such a recognition, in the face of a developing international situation which is putting the imperialist powers under grave suspicion among the peoples of the world, is a tribute to us, the Filipino nationalists of today, for the part we play in the peaceful but militant assertion of sovereignty in our struggle for complete independence, and makes us worthy heirs to that noble legacy of patriotism we Filipinos received from the men of 1896 that were symbolized by Jose Rizal, the intellectual realist, and Andres Bonifacio, the dreamer and the man of action.⁹

* * * *

There is a special bond that unites the new nations and the peoples of Asia and Africa. In these two areas of the globe, once the sites of great ancient civilizations and ever the cradle of faith and spiritualism, but now, in the eyes of the economically advanced West, merely a conglomeration of underdeveloped countries, a new and mighty force is stirring nations and peoples, opening new vistas,

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The Men of 1896, September 16, 1957.

⁹ Ibid.

and raising new hopes for the future. Peoples inhabiting far-flung territories, with widely divergent cultures, find that they all have one common ideal, one common rallying point, one common allegiance — nationalism. For the emerging nations of Asia and Africa have come to realize that their aspirations to freedom, equality, social justice, prosperity, and peace can be achieved only by a resolute assertion of the nationalist spirit.¹⁰

Nationalism As The Natural Antagonist Of Colonialism

Nationalism is the natural antagonist of colonialism. Nations that are still ruled by imperial powers are rallying behind nationalist leaders to secure their independence. Nations, like Indonesia and the Philippines, that have succeeded in regaining their political independence must still rely on the nationalist spirit in their struggle against colonialism. For the independence of countries such as ours cannot be complete until the last traces of colonialism have been eradicated.¹¹

Philippine Nationalism Contrasted With American Nationalism

The truth is that the Filipinos, like the Americans, have the right to love their country above all others. They have a right to cherish and protect their independence. They have a right to choose a government that will serve the best interests of the people; and only those who have designs against our independence, or who seek to advance their own interest at the expense of our people, can possibly have a motive to fear or distrust Filipino nationalism.¹²

* * * *

¹⁰ Greetings to Indonesia, September 22, 1959.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Speech delivered at the Independence Banquet under the auspices of the Professionals' Club, Manila, July 4, 1949.

Excessive reliance on foreign teaching, grounded obviously on a blind and unreasoning faith in things foreign, is at the root of this unfortunate change in the sense of values of many of our countrymen. The truth, however, is that while in the matter of nationalism we can learn from the American historical experience in their two wars of liberation (1776 and 1812), the present and the immediately preceding generations of Americans could hardly qualify to teach us nationalism. The development of industrial capitalism in the United States has made it the most powerful nation in the world, and therefore there is no longer any occasion nor any need for the Americans to think of nationalism, an idea and a privilege reserved only to subject and weak nations. Whatever nationalism Americans have today has acquired a different meaning. The American nationalists of 1776 were nationalists because they advocated independence and separation from a foreign state, Britain. They were the counterparts of our nationalists of 1896 and of today. But the nationalists in the U.S. today — or those that are currently described as American nationalists — do not seek independence from foreign domination, but instead, in the name of their national interests and prestige, they seek to expand or retain their markets abroad, and their political power or influence to protect them, for their surplus manufactures and surplus capital. This is true with respect to all developed capitalist nations. The contrast is clear. The concept of nationalism in underdeveloped nations inevitably collides with the concept of “nationalism” of the prosperous and powerful ones. The history of Asia in the last 100 years, particularly during the last few decades, conclusively demonstrated the inevitability of that conflict of interests.¹³

* * * *

¹³ The Men of 1896, September 16, 1957.

Is an American necessarily anti-Filipino or anti-British or anti-anything because he is first and foremost pro-American? And is a Filipino necessarily anti-American because he is pro-Filipino? The world has already suffered too much from these pros and antis, from these *philias* and *phobias*, from these mutual suspicions and antagonisms, to have much patience with those who try to revive them for selfish ends.¹⁴

* * * *

Our American friends must try to understand, without prejudice and without rancor, the nationalist goals of the Filipinos. While I cannot expect them to be unmindful of their own individual interests or those of their country as a whole, would it be too much to ask of them to pause and ponder for a while on their own past? Had the Americans not been nationalistic enough in the early days of their independent national life, they would still be a colony in fact, if not in name, of the British Empire, the English enjoying trade preferences and parity rights with them in the exploitation of America's natural resources, with military bases in choice places in America, and JUSMAGS and ICAs, and, perhaps, English clubs "off limits" to all but a few privileged American Tories. If America is what she is, her sovereignty supreme and undiminished, she owes it to the nationalistic policies she has pursued throughout her national independent existence, in spite of having had to depend, during a good part of the 19th century, on the British Navy for protection against continental Europe's imperialistic designs.¹⁵

* * * *

Our Lingering Colonial Complex

Our peculiar situation has been heightened by the

¹⁴ Speech delivered at the Independence Banquet under the auspices of the Professionals' Club, Manila, July 4, 1949.

¹⁵ The True Ultra-Nationalists, June 4, 1959.

unique circumstances in which we attained our independence. The other liberated Asian nations have been spared the ambiguities under which we labor; they faced issues that were clear-cut; blood and tears, exploitation and subjugation, and centuries of enmity, divided the Indonesians from the Dutch, the Indians and the Burmese from the British, the Vietnamese from the French; and their nationalist victories were not diluted by sentiments of gratitude, or by regrets, doubts, and apprehensions.

But an intensive and pervasive cultural colonization, no less than an enlightened policy of gradually increasing autonomy, dissolved whatever hatreds and resentments were distilled in the Filipino-American war, and, by the time of the enactment of the Jones Law, promising independence upon the establishment of a stable government, an era of goodwill was firmly opened, one which even the cabinet crisis under Governor General Wood could only momentarily disturb. A system of temporary trade preferences, under which our principal industries were developed, cemented the relationship with the hard necessities of economic survival, for it was belatedly realized that the same system of so-called free trade had made us completely dependent on the American market. The vicissitudes and triumphs of the common struggle against the Japanese Empire completed the extraordinary structure, and it was not at all strange or unexpected that, when our independence was finally proclaimed, it was not so much an act of separation, as one of "more perfect union."

Great numbers of Filipinos, therefore, pride themselves in professing fealty to America even without the rights of Americans. Their gaze is fixed steadily and unwaveringly on the great North American Republic, which is to them the alpha and the omega of human progress and political wisdom. . . .

The habit of continuously and importunately soliciting American assistance, and of running to the seemingly inexhaustible treasury in Washington whenever faced with financial difficulties, has only fostered a thoughtless and irresponsible prodigality, which has already been condemned by the most responsible among the Filipinos and the Americans, and has led to the preaching of the new gospel of self-reliance and self-help.¹⁶

* * * *

... our nationalism has in fact entered into another period of crisis, all the more grave because it is subtle and generally unrecognized.

This crisis does not arise from the growth of internationalism. It comes, if I may put it that way, from the stubborn remnants of bi-nationalism. We are afflicted with divided loyalties. We have not yet recovered from the spell of colonialism.

The flagstaffs that still stand, two by two, in front of our public buildings, are the symbols of this psychological phenomenon, this split personality, of our nation. Too many of our people, in their heart of hearts, profess allegiance not only to the Republic of the Philippines, whose sun and stars wave alone in this fourth year of our independence, but unconsciously also to the United States of America, whose stars and stripes may have been hauled down in fact but not in spirit, and which, by an optical illusion induced by long habit, are imagined to be still flying from the empty flagpole.¹⁷

Why Our Nationalist Movement Is Backward

We are beginning to catch up with the nationalism that is raging all around us in Asia. But, perhaps, because of the corruption and the demoralization to which

¹⁶ Our Lingering Colonial Complex, June 24, 1951.

¹⁷ Ibid.

many of us have been for years exposed as a result of alien interference in our political, economic, and even educational life, and because of the evil proclivities of our leaders, the cause of nationalism has not advanced as fast and as far as it should have. There are still in our midst a few anti-nationalists. You can find them among those who covet positions of privilege or influence but who can obtain them only by renouncing nationalism and becoming advocates or agents of foreign interests. They are few today, but they are well entrenched in the executive and legislative departments. And as the foreign stranglehold on our national economy increases, their number will increase, unless the tendency is counteracted by a stronger movement for nationalism.

Many call themselves nationalists. And in their own minds they are probably honest and sincere about their nationalism. But if, occasionally, their conduct and their efforts seem to deviate from true nationalism, it must be because their nationalism is purely of the emotional type.¹⁸

The False Nationalists

Today, the prime problem of the nationalist is how to enlighten those Filipinos who fail to recognize the root cause of their predicament, how to make them understand that they are the victims of their own distorted ideas, planted and nurtured in their minds by subtle colonialistic methods.

This task is made more difficult by the emergence in our midst of different types of so-called nationalists who stand in the vanguard of this movement while blunting, distorting, perhaps destroying it. First, there are the *barong tagalog* nationalists who deal in superficialities.

¹⁸ Sovereignty and Nationalism, November 6, 1955.

The sum total of their nationalism consists in singing the national anthem in the national language, reciting the sophomoric piece "I am a Filipino," and wearing the national costume. Then there are the "internationalist" nationalists, who would rather sacrifice nationalist advances in the political and economic fields than dare touch a hair on the head of one foreigner who must be granted national "parity" in the name of "special relationship," in exchange for a military protection of dubious value, at whatever cost to us, Filipinos, in sovereignty, national dignity, and physical survival. Finally, there are the hypocritical nationalists who mouth nationalist slogans but have no intention of living up to them, or who actually use these slogans to camouflage their active undermining of nationalist objectives, because to them there are authorities superior to the Republic and laws superior to the Constitution.¹⁹

* * * *

Is the nationalism described by Sun Yat-sen — self-determination and political separation from another — the same nationalism that the so-called positive nationalists of the day envision? Decidedly not. A few months before our late President²⁰ announced his so-called Positive Nationalism — an ideology which his heirs and followers have up to now refrained from touching — an article appeared in the Central Bank's News Digest in which its author explained his idea of positive nationalism as the subordination of local and regional loyalties to a higher one, the national loyalty. That theory presumes a lack of national unity which it seeks to create by expanding provincial loyalties to one of national scope. It does not seek to overthrow foreign control in all fields of national existence.

¹⁹ Nationalism and Our Historic Past, February 27, 1960.

²⁰ President Ramon Magsaysay.

As a people, we Filipinos are already nationally unified and have been so unified since the late 19th century. This is not to say that we can not improve on our spirit of national unity. But undue emphasis against provincialism and sectionalism would only divert our attention from the more transcendental concept of nationalism *vis-a-vis* all foreign nations — the assertion of our sovereignty and independence against all others, whether friendly or not. The point can not be overemphasized that we have to complete the struggle for independence which our heroic people of 1896 had begun at so much sacrifice on their part. No nation can attain prosperity, strength, and happiness until it has become truly the master of its own destiny. Political independence does not necessarily guarantee those national objectives, but it is a prerequisite for the attainment of these objectives. This is a lesson of history which a nation can ignore at its peril.²¹

Nationalism And Internationalism

The demarcation line between what is constructively nationalistic and what is discriminatingly chauvinistic is often very thin and delicate. The demarcation line, on the other hand, between what is a broad concept of nationalism and what is expedient internationalism can be thin and delicate too. At its worst, then, extreme nationalism can be a narrow view of country and people such that the viewer intentionally refuses to see defects, however blatant they are, while seeing only, magnified and exaggerated sometimes, the good points. The result of such a view is that progress has to be necessarily slow — it can, indeed, even produce stagnation. At its best, nationalism would mean a calm and mellow appraisal of the various aspects of one's country, its excellences and its failings;

²¹ The Men of 1896, September 16, 1957.

where it is strong; where it is not so strong and therefore needs reinforcement; where it is weak and therefore needs fortifying. That kind of nationalism is not afraid to face censure as it is not timid to accept praise, the clear-sighted kind which, in Churchill's definition, bravely criticizes country and people when at home, but desists from destructive criticism when away from home. It is a necessary step towards the best in internationalism which in turn is a broad, generous, and unified view of peoples and countries, unwarped by inhibiting prejudices and discriminations, and ramparted by understanding, tolerance, and sympathy.

In the political as well as in the other phases of a nation's life, these two attributes complement one another in ideal circumstances, internationalism being, as it were, an enlightened extension of nationalism. Thus, when we say that the Filipinos should patronize their own in the economic, political, social, and cultural fields, it does not mean exclusion of their neighbors. It merely means a self-cultivation which translates itself into self-dependence and consequent self-respect. Expanding the idea would be expressing regional self-cultivation, self-dependence, and self-respect. The terms do not overlap nor are they inimical; they constitute a continuing idea, or ideal, of growth and development in the concept of country, region, and world, to produce in the minds and hearts of people, world attitudes, which have the right values.²²

* * * *

It may be that the future of world democracy calls for an ever increasing measure of international cooperation and organization, for which each and every nation, without exception, must contribute a portion of its sovereignty, on a basis of equality as a condition *sine qua non*.

²² The Challenge of Independence, July 3, 1952.

Our nationalism, as I have already shown, is not incompatible with this sound internationalism. But no sane or true internationalism calls for the subordination of our vital national interests. Internationalism is not just another name for imperialism, and it cannot justify our willing reversion to the status of a colony.²³

The True Ultra-Nationalists

It is evident that our brand of nationalism is different from that of our accusers. We have no desire and we have never attempted to deny the national self-interest of other peoples in their own countries. We merely want to defend our own, in our own territory. We are nationalists but we can live in harmony with other nationalists, because all nationalisms can work out a plan for co-existence which will not detract from the sovereignty of any one nation. Those who are bent on carrying their nationalism beyond their national frontiers in order to overrun other nationalisms have ceased to be true nationalists and have become ultra-nationalists, which is another word for imperialists. *Ultra* is a Latin word which means *beyond in space*, as in the terms *plus ultra* and *non plus ultra*. An ultra-nationalist, therefore, is one who wants to be first not only in his own country, but also in other countries to which he is a foreigner; that is, an imperialist.²⁴

* * * *

My concept of nationalism has no trace of chauvinism. I respect the legal rights of established foreign firms. I welcome foreign interests as long as they contribute to the welfare of our country, increase the per capita income of the Filipinos, and do not attempt to influence government policy for selfish ends.²⁵

²³ Our Lingering Colonial Complex, June 24, 1951.

²⁴ The True Ultra-Nationalists, June 4, 1959.

²⁵ Nationalism and Industrialization, July 30, 1957.

The Mission of Nationalism — A Historical Review

... the mission of Filipino nationalism is not yet fulfilled. Its achievements in the past have been great and famous. It raised the First Republic as a fortress of equality and liberty among the Filipinos and defended it against two world empires. It kept alive the flame of our love of freedom when the Revolution was finally hunted down by a superior foe, and the weak in spirit, disheartened by an overwhelming military defeat, could see no other future than permanent submission to the conqueror. Filipino nationalism surged back irresistibly in the Nacionalista party and held aloft the true hope of the people during the long decades of political tutelage under the United States. Never abandoning the ideal of independence and faith in its dynamism and ultimate reality, Filipino nationalism established the autonomous Commonwealth as the laboratory of that independence. And when the clash of empires swept over our islands, it was Filipino nationalism that, determined to save the Filipino race from certain extermination and refusing to sacrifice its supreme interest in a bloody and meaningless oblation to an absent sovereign that could not for the moment render protection, raised the Second Republic as a shield for the people from a tyrannical and insane oppressor. History vindicated that wise and prudent policy when our people survived the holocaust to grasp at last the triumph of Filipino nationalism in the Third Republic.

Surely Filipino nationalism had a right to expect that such gigantic and glorious achievements had won for it authority, prestige, and devotion without question, and so it had with the masses of the Filipino people who still repose in it their unyielding faith. For Filipino nationalism is the very essence of our Republic; it is what makes us a nation; it is the innermost driving force of our people.

Yet it is strange indeed for us to hear, in the very morning of our independent existence, the voices of some of our own countrymen, decrying in borrowed accents and servile flattery, the very nationalism that has made us what we are. The great and noble achievements of our nationalism are depreciated; its very desirability is questioned. It is mocked as impractical; it is disparaged as an actual danger to the prosperity of the Republic.²⁶

The Task Of Nationalism In Rizal's Time And Today

... it is axiomatic that, for a colonial master to subjugate a people successfully and bend them to his purposes, he has but to make them forget their past and infuse in them the thought that they were nothing before he became their master and that everything they came to be thereafter they owed to him. To make subject peoples lose their national identity and hence their national pride and dignity and their consciousness of a greater destiny, has been, throughout the centuries, the technique and strategy of colonialism.

It was the great task of the nationalists of Rizal's time to resist this assault. They were fully aware that a people without a sense of racial identity was not a nation. For them, the preservation of racial identity was a patriotic duty dictated by necessity, a matter of national survival; because they knew that no nationalistic progress was possible unless they were cut off from their colonial mooring.

Today, we are faced with the same problem and we must approach it in the same manner that Rizal and his contemporary nationalists did. We must relive our historic past, not precisely the remote era of our Malayan

²⁶ Speech delivered at the Independence Banquet under the auspices of the Philippine Professionals' Club, July 4, 1949.

ancestors, but its revolutionary period with its fervent, unrequited propaganda and its glorious climax on the battlefield. We must be steeped in the ideas and events of those times because they were the ones that inspired and galvanized an entire race to seek and find deliverance from their foreign bondage.

The task of the nationalists today is, in a way, to complete what our nationalist forefathers had set before our people and nation. By a strange fatality, the movement which our nationalists started and which culminated in the revolution led by Bonifacio and Aguinaldo was interrupted by the arrival of new colonialist forces. The old Western imperialism appeared in a new garb of benevolence and helpfulness, with revised and "enlightened" methods of approach, but with the same underlying motivation. The only difference was that the first master did not take as much as the second. Ruthless in his ways, the first trampled upon all freedoms; the second sought our economic enslavement through subtle, legal, and constitutional processes.²⁷

* * * *

The present task of Filipino nationalism is perhaps the hardest of all, because it is the least spectacular, the least dramatic, the most open to misinterpretation and prejudice. It is to give this Republic an honest and efficient government, a government that will make our independence a real blessing to the people and thus enjoy their trust and support. It is a task that requires the patience, the quiet determination, the silent sacrifices of peace, rather than the swift and glorious effort of the battlefield. It will require the serene deliberation, the delicate discretion of statesmanship to promote our prosperity without sacrificing our independence, to assure

²⁷ Nationalism and Our Historic Past, February 27, 1960.

our security without restricting our sovereignty. But I am sincerely convinced that Filipino nationalism is better equipped to cope with this urgent need than a corrupt and bankrupt administration whose only foreign policy is either that of the snob or that of the beggar and the flatterer.

... nationalism is still the strongest and deepest force that unites the Filipinos ... No foreigner or foreign government need fear or distrust that nationalism, for it is not directed against him. Through all our history, it has fought only tyrants, traitors, and fools, and only they need flee. But it is a force futile to ignore and fatal to resist.²⁸

The Anti-Nationalist Campaign

Today the nationalist struggle is far from won. There are elements in both parties that seek to perpetuate colonial rule. Alien economic interests are trying hard to oppose and to sabotage the movement. Some enemies of nationalism are fighting it frontally. Others, masquerading as nationalists, are boring from within, acting as fronts for powerful foreign interests, or seeking to emasculate its meaning by trying to limit its operation to our cultural life alone so that the nation's economic exploitation by aliens may continue undisturbed behind a pleasant facade of cultural nationalism.

But these anti-nationalists must realize that their hours are numbered, that everywhere there are unmistakable signs that the people are experiencing a reawakening of the nationalistic faith which animated and gave meaning and substance to the lives of their forefathers, a growing awareness and understanding of the vital importance of reshaping our policies with a view to freeing them from

²⁸ Speech before the Philippine Professionals' Club, Manila, July 4, 1949.

alien control, so that, after our economy shall have passed into Filipino hands, this and future generations may at long last come into the full fruition of their priceless heritage.²⁹

* * * *

I cannot emphasize too strongly my firm belief and conviction that only an administration which shall have nationalism as the unifying factor and basis of its social, political, and economic policies can solve the grave, manifold problems which afflict our country today.³⁰

The Evils Of Lack Of Nationalism

Lack of nationalism is behind the half-hearted attempts at industrialization, because colonial minds do not dare take a step which would undermine the favored positions of foreign interests.

Lack of nationalism is behind our continued reliance on a disadvantageous raw material export economy, because colonial minds believe that only by dovetailing our economy with that of the United States can we survive as a nation.

Finally, lack of nationalism is behind the weak, docile, and unassertive policies of our government which have resulted in a high degree of foreign control over our economic life, because colonial minds instinctively underestimate native wit, ingenuity, and skill, while self-respect and self-reliance are strange concepts to them.

Since our lack of nationalism has prevented us from using our resources in the most effective way and primarily for our own benefit, we are today a poor nation beset by problems of unemployment, low per capita income and underproduction.³¹

²⁹ Our Political Parties Before the Bar of History, April 17, 1960.

³⁰ Short-Sighted Economic Goals, September 3, 1957.

³¹ Ibid.

The Meaning Of Independence

In our historical archives, there is no declaration of independence except that of Kawit. But that independence was buried in half a century of foreign domination. When we regained our independence in July 1946, we did not make a declaration for the purpose; we were satisfied with a Proclamation issued by the American President, and it was the American concept, not ours, of Philippine Independence that was placed in the document: a grant, not an assertion of rights. We became officially independent in the community of nations, but are we truly independent, for instance, in the realm of foreign relations, national defense, finance, and economics? Shall we blame on others our own shortcomings and complacency?

But we must not despair. A true national awakening shall doubtless come. The ranks of nationalists cannot but increase; the collective conscience continues to grow; the day of realization nears, because the moving finger continues to write. And some day this nation will realize, and will shape in deeds, Mabini's puissant and uncompromising exhortation which that immortal architect of the First Philippine Republic made just before the turn of the century: "Strive for the independence of thy country because thou alone hast real interest in its greatness and exaltation, since its independence means thy own freedom, its greatness thy own perfection, its exaltation thy own glory and immortality."³²

* * * *

The first thing we have learned is that political independence is not the end, but only the beginning, and, in another sense, not an end in itself but only the means to an end.

³² Economic Nationalism, March 28, 1957.

Independence, by itself, does not guarantee, and it has not assured, our political rights and individual liberties. Domestic tyrants can take the place of foreign masters.

Nor does independence by itself guarantee economic security and social justice. In comparison with the era of full American sovereignty, we pay now higher taxes for less efficient public services by a wasteful administration; we run our government on a continuous deficit, instead of wholesome superavits; our finances are shaky; our social problem, and its concomitants of peace and order, a thousand-fold more acute, to such an extent that the armed forces of the Republic are totally engaged in police work, capturing one Huk commander today and killing half a dozen of the rank and file tomorrow, at the cost of millions of pesos for every high-sounding "operation", while leaving external perils and threats of aggression to the care of powerful protectors.

There was always superficial logic on the side of those who wondered why we wanted independence when, under the shield of American institutions, we already enjoyed the substance of freedom and its richest material rewards.

Are we any more secure now in the enjoyment of our constitutional rights? Perhaps less. By executive fiat the privileges of the writ of habeas corpus have been indefinitely deleted from the Constitution for one-half of the nation, on the flimsiest of excuses. Are we any freer in electing our rulers? Surely less, by the standards of the 1947 and 1949 elections. Are we any surer that today and tomorrow our people will have enough to eat? Perhaps not. The cost of prime necessities has become prohibitive and minimum wages cannot keep pace with rising prices. Unemployment is more severe than in any other

period of our history, even though this administration does not seem to be aware of it.

Shall we then say that independence has been a disappointment; that our foreign policy is a declaration that we cannot think for ourselves, and have lost our freedom of decision; that our economic policy is a confession that we cannot pay our own way; and that our domestic policy is proof that we cannot rule ourselves, and are ready to surrender our rights to the first bully who can intimidate us with big words, theatrical gestures, and a sonorous voice of command? Can it be said that we are now afraid of, or indifferent to, the independence we sought for so long?

There may be Filipinos who think so, but I am not one of them. For all the tragic mistakes and misadventures . . . I have kept my faith in the vitality of our nation and the necessity of our independence, with a firm determination to help make it a reality, and I am confident that most Filipinos share that faith and high resolve.

There are those of us who expected too much from independence, and there are those who expect too little from our own people.

I cannot find it in my heart to blame the first. Among the naive and the ignorant, the ideal of national independence became commingled with dreams of an earthly paradise, in which the Filipinos would live in freedom from fear and want.

This is a delusion, but one that was nurtured by the simple faith of the common people who found nothing else worthy of their belief and loyalty, and one that sustained the humble fighters on many a battlefield for freedom.

Time can dispel it. Time will make us realize, if it has not yet made us realize, that independence is not a

guarantee of freedom and a life of abundance, but only an opportunity to achieve and preserve them through our own efforts and owing little to the magnanimity or sufferance of friends or masters.

Freedom can be guaranteed only by ourselves, by our own vigilance, determination, wisdom, courage, and readiness to make sacrifices. A foreign master may be the kindest, richest, and most enlightened that can be imagined, but he is still a master, and by that very token endowed with the power to take away or withhold at pleasure whatever benefits he has conferred or may confer on his subjects.

That is the ultimate justification of independence, and also its greatest challenge. If our political rights are curtailed, it is because we allow it. If our economic position is insecure, it is because we have lacked the wit and the will to make it secure. If our social problem is unresolved, it is our own fault. If we have no peace and order, we have no one to blame but ourselves.

These national evils are, therefore, reason to become disappointed, not with independence, but with our own behaviour. On the other hand, they are no cause for giving up our hopes. It is far worse to expect too little from our own people, than for them to have expected too much from independence. The latter is only the sin of presumption, born of excessive confidence. The first is the greater and more terrible sin of despair, born of uncontrollable fear and total loss of faith.³³

* * * *

Only when we rise from the knees we have bent in beggary, and stand beside the other nations of the world, not on crutches but on our own feet, thinking and speaking and acting as free men and as free citizens of a true

³³ The Challenge of Independence, July 3, 1952.

Republic, in name and in fact, with undivided loyalties to our own sovereign nation and people, and under a legitimate regime dispensing justice and promoting the general welfare, then and only then can we rightly claim to have achieved and deserved our independence, and have cause to indulge in a national celebration of the glorious resurrection of our freedom after the long and mournful season of its betrayal, passion, and crucifixion.³⁴

Nationalism And Culture

Perhaps because of our seven hundred years of servitude, the traits that will take us time to outgrow is colonial-mindedness, and an indiscriminate imitativeness of whatever we see in our former masters. We took after the Spaniards in many of their predilections, often to excess — witness Doña Victorina de Espadaña in Rizal's *Noli* — and we behave in the same fashion under American influence. This undiscerning imitativeness is especially notorious in our youths, notably in what they acquire from American movies. You can hardly take ten steps in any of our streets without running into a swaggering, brown would-be James Dean. And if you come across any number of our female teenagers, it is certain 90 per cent of them are crazy over Elvis Presley.

We are disturbed and embarrassed when we are charged with being pro-western, particularly in our manners and habits that are patently American or European.

But we also are disturbed and humiliated if criticized for apparently returning blindly to, and reviving, our faded oriental traditions as rooted in our ancient past; in our embarrassment we seem to be the first to laugh at ourselves.

³⁴Our Lingering Colonial Complex, June 24, 1951.

We apologize for our western customs because we know we are orientals. But we are ashamed also of what characterize us as orientals, fearing that such traits are old-fashioned and backward.

I feel that we should not pretend to be occidentals when everybody knows we are orientals. On the other hand, it is a shame to regard older and more backward eastern ways as genuinely Filipino, because no matter how much we love our own we cannot go back to the year 1300.³⁵

* * * *

The education of our people for more than half a century has been based on alien standards with complete disregard of our idiosyncrasies and indigenous habits. Cultural channels have been crowded with American best-sellers, American movies, American music, and American comics. The simple fact that fourteen years after our independence, English is still our medium of instruction and our national language has still to struggle to keep its humble place in our educational system, is the best evidence that our minds are yet those of bondsmen.³⁶

* * * *

The indiscriminate assimilation of the grossest aspects of foreign culture; the aimless Americanization of our ways, our customs and attitudes; the disregard, bordering on contempt, for all things native; all these attest to the near fulfillment of Rizal's melancholy forebodings and premonitions. "Their spirit was broken and they submitted," said Rizal of the Filipinos under Spain. I may paraphrase this sentence in the light of current events: "Their understanding was clouded and they acquiesced."³⁷

* * * *

³⁵ Sovereignty and Nationalism, November 6, 1955.

³⁶ Nationalism and Our Historic Past, February 27, 1960.

³⁷ Ibid.

Because of our neglect and perhaps our disregard of Rizal's teachings, it seems that we are wittingly offering ourselves to total foreign domination. Already we are allowing our minds, our beliefs, and our economic life to be enslaved; we have even allowed our tongue to be enslaved. Because of this tendency of ours, the distinguishing traits of our race will gradually disappear, as will the native customs bequeathed to us by our ancestors, and the natural resources that Divine Providence destined for the enjoyment of our race. Was not one of Rizal's most valuable admonitions that we should not behave as if we were strangers in our own land? If we analyze our present situation, we shall find it the very opposite of what the hero had advised! We are indeed like strangers in our own country — in our appearance, our customs, our economic life, and our language — even many of our shortcomings appear to have been imported.

... It is well that we follow the march of progress and civilization. We can imitate and adopt the laudable usages and customs of other peoples; ... but we can do all that without having to surrender what is peculiarly our own.

We should cherish, bless, safeguard, and develop all that is our own. Let us comport ourselves like true Filipinos as Rizal wanted us to be, and take pride in it, just as Rizal did while traveling and residing in foreign countries. When all of us shall have become true Filipinos by following the example and teachings that are Rizal's precious legacy to our people ... only then shall we be redeemed from this situation in which we seem to be strangers in our own country. Let us strive to put our country in its proper place because the security and dignity of a state rest on the security and dignity of its citizens.³⁸

³⁸ A True Filipino Is A Rizalist, August 30, 1959.

Our Duty As Patriotic Citizens

Our patriotic duty as citizens of this Republic is clear and inescapable. Politically, we must reassert our national rights, drawing inspiration from the nationalist spirit that animated our heroes of 1896. Economically, we must unshackle ourselves from the chains of a colonial economic system which can bring us nothing but poverty and economic stagnation. For both tasks we need only the capacity to make a thorough reappraisal of the economic realities of the nation, the courage to implement decisively the resulting program of action, and a dogged determination to reach our chosen goal, no matter what the cost.

I have always had faith in our people. A race that can boast of the intelligence of a Rizal and a Mabini, the courage of a Bonifacio, the abnegation of a Marcelo H. del Pilar, and the devotion and spirit of sacrifice so magnificently displayed by the whole nation in its three epic struggles for freedom and independence, is a race that can, with the right leadership, perform such feats of nation-building as will command the respect and admiration of the entire world.³⁹

* * * *

I trust that a generation from now, the Filipino people may stand with legitimate pride before the world and before history as a paragon of democracies; and that it may be said of us that, in adversity, we were united and undismayed; in prosperity, magnanimous and prudent; against dictators, whether fascistic, or communistic, or just opportunistic, relentless and uncompromising; against demagogues, aloof and contemptuous; in fulfillment of our duties, earnest and self-exacting; in love of country, pledged with "our lives, our fortunes and our

³⁹ Nationalism and Industrialization, July 30, 1957.

sacred honor," and practicing a firm but restrained nationalism illumined by the thought that this world is one world and we are one with humankind.⁴⁰

Recto's Faith In The Filipino Nationalists

I shall conclude by firmly asserting that, as in the days of Rizal, Del Pilar, Bonifacio, Aguinaldo, and Mabini, and as it shall be in the future, this inspiring and heroic movement for complete independence and sovereignty and for national dignity and honor must be credited to the Filipino nationalists, whoever they are, wherever they are, and whatever their beliefs and ideologies on other matters may be. These men — the Filipino nationalists — shall remain steadfast in their nationalism, the firm rock on which our heroes and martyrs established this new nation, and it is my fervent prayer and my unshakeable faith that the forces of imperialism, if I may paraphrase the Scriptures, shall not prevail against it.⁴¹

⁴⁰ The Challenge of Independence, July 3, 1952.

⁴¹ They Shall Not Prevail, April 29, 1959.

PART TWO

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

For our country today, industrialization and nationalism are twin goals. Indeed, they are two sides of the same coin. Nationalism cannot be realized and brought to full flowering without a thorough-going industrialization of our economy by the Filipinos themselves. And you cannot have an industrialized Philippine economy controlled and managed by Filipinos without the propulsive force of a deep and abiding spirit of nationalism.¹

¹ Nationalism and Industrialization, July 30, 1957.

The propulsive force that will take us to our economic goal is nationalism. We achieved political independence, or the restoration of our sovereignty as a people, by asserting consciously, fearlessly, and unceasingly, our aspiration to become a free and independent nation, until the foreign sovereign power, America, finally agreed to the restoration of our independent political status. In other words, we asserted the prerogatives of our nationalism. Today, we are free politically, but we are far from free economically. A nation that has been a colony for a long time cannot and does not, on the day of its political independence, achieve simultaneously its economic independence. But we have had ample time to be well past the first stages of the transformation, and we would be so now were it not for the stubborn insistence of past administrations to cling to the old system. That transformation can still be worked out by the people themselves, under the guidance and inspiration of their leaders, through the stimulus of wise and farsighted policies, perhaps with calculated sacrifices, and perhaps also with the advice and suggestions of disinterested foreign friends. It is the people, through their leaders, who must achieve economic freedom, or the change from a colonial pattern of economy into an independent one. Only economic nationalism will enable us to achieve basic and lasting solutions to our problems of mass poverty, unemployment, underproduction, perennial trade imbalance, and misery and backwardness in the midst of rich natural resources and abundant manpower.²

* * * *

My program of industrialization is a logical outgrowth of my stand on Philippine nationalism. National-

² The Role of Labor in Our Economic Emancipation, September 8, 1957.

ism in the economic field is the control of the resources of a country by its own people to insure its utilization primarily for their own interest and enjoyment. Its political expression is independence and sovereignty, the desire to be treated with respect by all other nations, and to decide, without bowing to outside pressure, the most advantageous course of action for a country *vis-a-vis* these powers. This political aspect of nationalism becomes a dynamic mobilizing force which insures the realization of the economic objectives. In turn, the economic objectives lend practical reality to the fight for sovereignty.

What does economic nationalism mean for us, Filipinos? Economic nationalism means the control of the resources of the Philippines so that they may be utilized primarily in the interest of the Filipinos. What course does this economic self-interest indicate for the Philippines at the present time? I have demonstrated by means of facts and figures that a raw-material exporting nation, that is, an agricultural nation, is always dependent on a manufacturing nation. In any relation between the two, the industrial nation is the gainer, the agricultural nation, the loser. This is implicit in the fact that we export our raw materials cheaply, because we cannot use them as such; and we import the finished products at high prices, because we need them in our daily lives. Clearly, under this set-up, we are not in control of our natural resources for our best interest. But if we industrialize, we shall no longer be at the mercy of manufacturing nations, and, in more and more instances, as we thoroughly industrialize, our own people shall become the beneficiaries of the values added to raw materials by the manufacturing process. There is no question, therefore, that economic self-interest demands that we industrialize.³

* * * *

³ Nationalism and Industrialization, July 30, 1957.

The simple meaning that may be given to economic nationalism is a nation's aspiration, desire, and willingness to improve its material and cultural condition through its own talents, resources, and sustained labor, and for the benefit of the whole national community. Its main-spring is a strong sense of togetherness of the people in a common desire to progress, to improve livelihood, to achieve worthy and noble things, to enhance the good name, even the glory, of the national community, of the country which is the homeland, of the flag which symbolizes country and nation and the nation's history and ideals. Without that dominant and ever-present will to achieve the enhanced well-being of the large community, rather than merely one's own selfish interest, any economic effort or activity, however large or impressive, is not nationalistic in character. A certain kind of progress and material development can be achieved by economic activity that is not nationalistic in orientation but it cannot solve any of the major social, economic, and cultural problems of that large community which we call a nation.⁴

Why Filipino Ownership Is Necessary

Now, you may ask, why the insistence on Filipino ownership or control of such variegated industries? The answer is: unless it were so, it would be impossible to place the benefits to be derived from these industries within the means of enjoyment of the largest majority of the Filipinos. We must remember that if industries of such variety and scope were actually existing, they would be creating enormous amounts of wealth annually. If the wealth created were to remain in the Philippines and be reinvested again and again in other productive enterprises which would create, in turn, new wealth, then all that wealth could sustain an ever-spreading and rising standard of

⁴ Industrialization and Economic Nationalism, October 3, 1959.

living. But if the industries were alien or foreign-owned, then much of the wealth created would have to leave the country, what remains would never be enough to cope with the ever-increasing needs of an expanding Filipino population — and this is precisely the circumstance in which we have found ourselves through many decades — the few rich would merely continue becoming richer, and most of them would be aliens and foreigners, and an ever-increasing number of the poor would be getting poorer. It is a similar circumstance, we may note, which brought about the Fidel Castro revolution in Cuba not long ago.⁵

* * * *

To expect non-Filipinos engaged in large-scale enterprises in our country to have a nationalistic orientation in their economic activities is, as they say in Indonesia, like expecting lizards to grow feathers. We have no choice; it has to be the Filipinos themselves, through the nationalistic aspiration of their economic endeavors, who must bring about a truly industrialized Philippines.⁶

Alien Control Of Our Economy

Our economy is heavily dominated by aliens. They have, *per capita*, more income than our own people. This is so because capital, which here is to a large extent foreign, begets profits, and the profits increase the capital that begets even more profits, whereas salaries and wages, which constitute the share of the people in a colonial economy, are never high enough to allow their recipients much beyond their needs for daily living; consequently, there is almost nothing left for savings. If, therefore, we mean to develop an economy that will bring welfare to our people, we must reverse this trend.⁷

* * * *

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ A Realistic Economic Policy for the Philippines, September 26, 1956.

As late as 1951, raw material sources and channels of distribution were in alien hands, according to F. Rodriguez, erstwhile Chairman of our National Economic Council. Other officials at that time revealed that 80 per cent of our retail trade was alien-controlled; that 78 per cent of our foreign trade was in the hands of aliens; that sugar, and trade in rice, copra, tobacco, and lumber was also alien-controlled; that 68 per cent of our foreign exchange was bought by aliens.

There is urgent need for study and adoption of measures calculated to eliminate this alien stranglehold on our economy. Will our friends and advisers help us succeed in this great endeavor? Will they assist us in the study and adoption of the needed measures? Can we expect this kind of assistance from them? They, too, have their economic welfare to think of and protect. That is in the nature of things. We will have to depend, therefore, on our own resources, on our own ingenuity, on our own judgment which, right or wrong, shall at least be guided by the consideration that the national interest is supreme and that the common patrimony must always be defended and safeguarded with all the care, awareness, dedication, and vigilance to which every Filipino must be regarded as having pledged his honor from the cradle to the grave.⁸

The Cause Of Our Poverty

Why is the Filipino worker poor under the present feudalistic regime? Although underproduction, unemployment, and poverty are the three principal problems of the working class, the truth is that these are only the natural consequence of the two dominant facts in our eco-

⁸ Our Raw-Material-Export Economy, June 26, 1957.

conomic system: first, that we are predominantly an agricultural country, and second, that we have a colonial economy characterized by foreign domination in many important areas.

In wartime, the workingmen suffer most at the hands of foreign invaders. In peace time, it is still the workingmen who suffer most from alien control of our economy. This is true because of the very nature of foreign domination, whether in peace or in war. Foreigners who go to any country for conquest, or to set up businesses, do not do so to serve the interest of their host-nation. They go because they are attracted by abundant natural resources and cheap labor, both of which guarantee higher and easier profits than in the home country. If this were not the case, no foreigner would leave his country to seek his fortune elsewhere; no foreigner would fight to conquer another people without expectations of profit or a better life than he has at home.

A country dominated by foreigners enriches the foreigners, a few of the nationals, but seldom its workingmen. Our country therefore is poor, its workingmen are poor, and many thousands are jobless, mainly because we have had an alien dominated economy and political life for more than four centuries now. If Filipinos had been independent from foreign domination in those four centuries, with the tremendous natural resources in their homeland, they would surely have found better ways of developing their economic assets to achieve a high standard of living and prosperity for all elements of the population, including the mass of workingmen.⁹

* * * *

The workingmen of the Philippines are poor for still other reasons besides alien control of our economy.

⁹ The Role of Labor in Our Economic Emancipation, September 8, 1957.

Throughout the more than four decades of American regime, the emphasis of our educational system was on the training of our people in democratic principles and practices and in public administration. This emphasis was well-placed; for the high literacy of our people and their better understanding of the workings of the democratic processes have been the beneficial results of that policy. But commendable as that educational orientation was, it left a gaping void in the integrated education of the Filipinos.

The educational system fired our people's desire for political liberty, but it purposely neglected to develop economic nationalism among the citizens, and instead insidiously inculcated in them ideas of economic dependence on America. The literacy of our people, their awareness of the high standards of living of the West so temptingly shown in movies, television, books, magazines, and other forms of advertisements, merely made the Filipinos more vulnerable and readily susceptible to the sales appeal of promoters of American trade and commerce. The Filipinos, ill-prepared to develop their country economically in order to attain a standard of living comparable to that of the West, were nevertheless thoroughly conditioned to become avid and insatiable consumers of Western finished products, from canned milk to flashy cars and television sets. Thus developed the preponderance in our national economy of a merchant class composed mostly of aliens, leaving the native producer class to shift for itself as best it could in an economy that is thoroughly colonial in nature.

To meet the needs of merchants, especially import tycoons, there must be a continuous supply of foreign exchange. The native producers were thus encouraged to concentrate production on a few export products, mainly

raw materials, that earn the foreign exchange with which to pay for ever-increasing imports of finished goods, from lipsticks to automobiles. Importation and distribution of foreign goods, however, create few opportunities for mass employment; and the production of raw materials for export requires less manpower than the processing of those raw materials into finished goods.¹⁰

* * * *

We must have the courage to face the true problems of our nation so that we may succeed in raising the standard of living of our millions of poor and unemployed. We must have the honesty of mind to tell them the truth, as Rizal in his time had to do, so that they may free themselves from their empty illusions, so that their minds may be awakened to the real solutions to their difficulties. We must have the integrity of patriotism to tell our people that they are poor because our economy is unbalanced, and, therefore, unable to give them the opportunities to use in their interest the tremendous potentialities of the country's natural resources. We should have the courage to tell our masses and make them understand that our economy as a whole is poor and underdeveloped because it is colonial in pattern, and that all the hand-shaking and back-patting of the men they elect to office will not improve their lot if these leaders are not nationalistic enough to change the character of our economy.¹¹

The Need For Economic Planning

Economic planning is, therefore, a "must" for us. For without such planning, either the greedy few will despoil the nation of its resources or those resources will remain unexploited to the detriment of national interest.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Filipinism and the Coming Elections, August 10, 1957.

Ours is an underdeveloped country and has been so for centuries. While our economy has stagnated, our population has increased. Mass poverty and mass unemployment have been the inevitable results. It cannot be doubted that if we let things continue drifting, we will soon fall prey to communism, for the decisive battle against this enemy shall be fought not on the legal and parliamentary stage, as some people want us to believe, but on the economic.

And this planning should be the government's special concern. Some will call this socialism. Be it so. But it has been our sad experience that private Filipino entrepreneurs, without government initiative and intervention in the form of incentives or aid, have not been able to take advantage of opportunities for increasing the national wealth that would provide employment and bring welfare and economic security for all the people. Only a bold leadership and decisive action by the government can produce the break-through that will set us moving away from present poverty and nationwide unemployment.¹²

The Colonial Pattern Of Our Economy

There is, of course, an economic policy in the Philippines, but it is not one made by Filipinos nor is it intended for the welfare of the Filipinos. It was conceived and formulated by others and introduced and implemented here for purposes other than the nation's interest.

This economic policy has for its basic objectives: (1) to keep the Philippines the agricultural country that it has always been, and (2) to attract to the Philippines foreign direct investments. For the realization of these objectives, appropriate measures have been devised: (a) economic aid, to be dispensed thru officers and economic

¹² A Realistic Economic Policy for the Philippines, September 26, 1956.

advisers who are alert to the above basic objectives; (b) advisory assistance in all sectors of activity, both public, including practically all government offices and agencies, and private, including labor and peasant organizations, and in all fields — political, economic, military, social, and cultural; (c) military protection, or more accurately, token military protection, thru a so-called alliance loose in terms and terminable on one year's notice, and a lease of bases for 99 years with no provision for its earlier termination; and (d) parity rights for the Americans with respect to all business activities and public utilities and the exploitation of the country's natural resources.¹³

* * * *

An economic policy must respond to basic economic problems, those arising from the economic realities in the nation, among which the following are the most important: the kind of economy that the nation must have, and the proper approach to the question of foreign investments and financing.

We have not settled these basic issues.¹⁴

Economic Nationalism Means Industrialization

All things considered, what should then be our economic policy?

It must be industrialization in its fullest sense. The goal is an economy of prosperity, that is, an ever growing national production. It is an economy where the major economic activities and efforts of the people are increasingly directed towards non-rural pursuits. That has been the way of all industrial nations. That is what I envision for our people. We should, therefore, oppose the main-

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

tenance here of a rural economy and the adoption of any policy or program that tends to perpetuate it. I do not mean that our agriculture should be abandoned altogether or that we should not improve on present methods. What I do mean is that, if we want to prosper, we should concentrate less on agriculture and not regard it as the main basis of our national economy. It is an error — a grievous error — to identify or equate economic development with rural development.

It is for this reason that I view the foreign-inspired rural development program in this country with deep concern and suspicion. As a positive program, it was conceived in 1950, found expression in the Bell Mission Report and the Quirino-Foster Agreement, was later dramatized in the Hardie Report and the MacMillan Report. The word "rural" has found its way into every slogan, as if it were a word of magic power. Every community throughout the length and breadth of the land is being fed with rural propaganda. Foreign-financed organizations mushroomed all around: PRRM (Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement), PRUCIS (Philippine Rural Improvement Service), 4-H Clubs (Heart, Hands, Head and Health). The movement has not spared even the schools. Agricultural schools have been expanded and have become pet projects of the government, although you cannot find a job in any government office for a Los Baños graduate. Community schools, according to our representatives at the World Assembly of Teachers and Educators held here recently, should help check the drift of our people from the land. All I can say is that, if they do they shall have succeeded in pegging our economy to its present agricultural structure, that is, to poverty. From the experience of all industrial countries, we have learned that economic progress requires the shifting of the major part of the people from the land to industrial pursuits.

The demagogue may paint the rural development program as attractively as he can. He may raise high hopes among the people in the rural areas as an effective vote-getting technique. But whatever may be his intentions in foisting the rural development program on the people, he does a disservice to them. The increase in agricultural productivity and in agricultural production can never hope to keep up with the growth of the population. For their own benefit, they should turn to industry for it is there that they will find deliverance from an occupation which, according to a UN Report, for the greatest efforts gives the least returns to the worker, outside of domestic servants. It is disheartening to note that this is not yet fully understood amongst our people. It is only fair that they know the truth, and it is for this reason that I have decided to expose the defects of an agricultural economy and the evils of a program designed to tie us down to such an economy.¹⁵

* * * *

But we can not close our eyes to the fact that for several years we have been misled into following the agricultural or rural orientation. I would be the last to ignore the role of agriculture in any economy, or to advocate less concern for the rural population of the country which still forms the bulk of our total population. Not only am I not opposed to the land tenure reform but I believe the adoption of such reform and of any other social and economic reforms imperative. I advocate these measures not only as measures of social justice but — and this is more important — as economic measures to help increase the purchasing power of our people which must go hand in hand with our effort to increase the national output thru industrialization. We are to-day one of the poorest nations in the world, judging from the statistics of the United Na-

¹⁵ Ibid.

tions. Under the present circumstances, the need for increasing the national produce is even more pressing than the need for making a more just distribution of the same, which is what is meant by social justice. But a real concern for social justice should not blind us to our main objective, that of increased production, which can only be attained if industrialization is given top priority in our economic planning.¹⁶

The Plight Of Agricultural Economies

Now, let us take a look at the peculiar realities of the Philippine situation. Our colonial economy, being an agricultural, export-import, alien-dominated one, is necessarily poor. Since the time economic imperialism was developed, that is, since the time the domestic markets of the developing capitalist industrial countries became glutted and the need for outside markets for their surplus arose, nations with agricultural economies were absorbed by the industrial nations, to become agricultural adjuncts of the latter's industrial economies. Being agricultural, we do not manufacture most of the finished or manufactured goods that we need for our consumption, and therefore we have to import them. Being agricultural, we must export solely or mostly raw materials in order to pay for our imports. Our own post-war experience reveals that as years go by we have to export more units of our raw products to pay for a given unit of the manufactured products that we import. Thus, no matter how much harder and longer we work to produce more raw material exports, we are always on the losing end in our foreign trade. That is the fate of all agricultural economies today. Being agricultural and being poor, and being a people suffering from a colonial mentality, our economy is susceptible to alien

¹⁶ Industrialization, the Only Cure for Our Economic and Social Ills, June 24, 1955.

economic infiltration, penetration, or invasion. Before the war, alien ownership of production and exchange facilities in important sectors of our economy was acquired mostly by resident aliens thru investment from accumulated profits made in our own country. After the war, alien ownership and control of our economy were considerably increased thru foreign, mostly American, private direct investments. The extent of combined alien ownership and control in our economy has reached dangerous proportions. As of 1938, according to the report of the Joint US-PI Finance Commission of 1947, about 1/4 of the national wealth was already owned by aliens.¹⁷

Industrialization As A Solution To Agricultural Problems

What are the main problems of Philippine agriculture? Unemployment and disguised unemployment, low *per capita* income, and *caciquism*. We all know that there is a lot of unemployment in our rural areas. Rural folk go to urban centers in search of jobs only to go back to the farm because the towns have no employment opportunities for them. Industrialization will create jobs and will, therefore, absorb surplus rural labor. In addition to those whom statistics list down as unemployed, there are many more who stay and help their relatives till a small patch of land, not because their labor is needed, but because they have nowhere else to go. Industry could use this wasted man-power.

Then, too, the farmers themselves have their slack seasons which they could make use of by joining the industrial force as occasional workers in processing plants near the farms. Such increased opportunities for employment would help solve the second rural problem; namely, low

¹⁷ A Realistic Foreign Policy for the Philippines, August 18, 1956.

per capita income. But the biggest boost to rural income will be the increased demand for diversified agricultural products and by-products which local industries will need for raw materials. Furthermore, local industries could produce modern farming equipment which, with fertilizers and more scientific methods of farming, would greatly increase the yield per hectare.

One of the sources of discontent in our rural areas is *caciquism*. The feudal relations which weigh so heavily on the shoulders of our peasantry will be changed under the impact of industrialization. In the United States, England, West Germany, and other industrialized countries, there is no *caciquism*; first, because the fact that agricultural workers can shift from rural to urban employment acts as a restraining factor on the rural employer and, second, because the typical employer-employee relationship in industry permeates the agricultural field and finally supplants the old feudal one. In the same way, industrialization will spell the end of *caciquism* in our rural areas.

Thus you see how industrialization will accelerate agricultural development. The resulting benefits will be general and permanent. They will not be merely the palliatives which hitherto have been masquerading as rural development programs.¹⁸

The Negative Attitude Of Advanced Nations To Our Industrialization Objectives

Centuries of colonialism had closed our eyes to our own economic potentials and made us believe that an industrial economy is the prerogative of western society and is beyond the skill and competence of Asians.

¹⁸ Nationalism and Industrialization, July 30, 1957.

This was the grand deception which the colonial powers succeeded in impressing upon the great majority of Asians.¹⁹

* * * *

Indeed, the lesson of Japan is that Orientals have within themselves the capacity to industrialize if only they would put their minds and hearts to it. Impressed by Western industrial progress, Japan decided to beat the West at her own game, and in this she is succeeding admirably. We have in Japan's economic achievement a great lesson to learn and a great example to emulate.

And what of Russia and China? In these countries, scientists have now acquired a position of prominence and constitute a class which may well be considered as the elite. You and I may have no taste for the totalitarian or the communist order, but we cannot close our eyes to the fact that these countries owe, in a large measure, their industrial might to scientists and the spirit of discipline of their peoples.²⁰

* * * *

The policy of some of those nations which have the capability to lend assistance to nations like ours which desire to industrialize has not been encouraging. It remains obvious to any student that that policy has been opposed to the industrialization of underdeveloped countries. And when the nationalist movements, which inevitably call for rapid industrialization, could no longer be ignored, these wealthy nations would channel the industrialization of the underdeveloped ones to their benefit by manipulating loans and credits in order to assure the outflow of their direct investments into the borrowing countries.²¹

¹⁹ A New Deal for Filipino Scientists, May 14, 1960.

²¹ Matters of Concern Between Indonesia and the Philippines, September

²⁰ Ibid.

23, 1959.

Industrialization: The Alternative To Poverty

In the present age, economic development is, for all practical purposes, equivalent to industrialization. Stagnation and poverty are the alternative to industrialization.²²

* * * *

The clues to a correct and clear understanding of what industrialism means are, first, the circumstance that the finished products consumed are of local manufacture and the conveniences enjoyed are also locally produced, and in factories and plants predominantly owned by the citizens themselves; and, second, the fact that most of the people, not just a small minority enjoy these finished products and modern conveniences of life.²³

* * * *

An agricultural economy, as that term is today universally understood, is an economy where the major, though not the exclusive, economic efforts of a nation, in terms of labor and investments, are directed to agriculture and other extractive pursuits. In such an economy, there are also a few manufacturing and service industries, but these constitute only the minor part and are mere adjuncts of the main economy. In an industrial economy, on the other hand, the case is the other way around. While there must necessarily be extractive production, the major, though again not the exclusive, economic efforts of the nation are directed to manufacturing. In both, all the various sectors of production are therefore present, but they differ in the proportion of economic efforts directed to the extraction of raw materials and to the processing of these raw materials into finished products.

²² *Industrialism and Economic Nationalism*, October 3, 1959.

²³ *Ibid.*

Since raw materials, whether in the world market or in the various national markets, are always of much lower value than the products into which they are processed, it follows that producers of raw materials always receive much less income than producers of finished products. This is likewise true among nations: an industrial nation is a prosperous and, hence, a strong and dominant nation, while an agricultural nation is a poor and, consequently, a weak and dependent nation. Industrial nations have never wanted other nations that are raw-material producers to industrialize. England tried to prevent or hamper manufacturing in America. This in fact was one of the major causes of the American Revolution.

Because of our rich mineral resources which include petroleum, iron, coal, copper, nickel, manganese, chromite, and other important raw materials — which today are being taken away from our land for the use and benefit of foreign industries — we assuredly can industrialize, despite foreign advice to the contrary. The prosperity of the Filipino people will always be an impossibility if we do not industrialize.²⁴

* * * *

The policy of industrializing the country should be pursued vigorously and sincerely. Many of the industries to which our administrations, past and present, point with pride as achievements of their so-called industrialization programs are nothing more than assembling, bottling, or packaging plants, or concerns which import an almost finished product and merely perform the last stage of manufacture before placing it on the selling counter. When we refer to these enterprises as “industries”, we are deceiving ourselves. We are contenting ourselves with spreading a thin veneer of industrialism on a backward agricultural

²⁴ Short-Sighted Economic Goals, September 3, 1957.

economy. Such industries import the almost finished products of foreign labor so that only an infinitesimal amount of labor is utilized here to complete the manufacturing process. This, as I said, is subsidizing foreign labor at the expense of local labor.²⁵

*Nationalist Industrialization —
Not Just "Industrialization"*

I need not stress the point that when I speak of industrialization I mean nationalist industrialization, that is, the industrialization of our own economy, the Filipino economy, not merely the industrialization of the Philippines in a territorial sense. As I once pointed out in a Senate speech, foreign direct investments, as distinguished from foreign loans, not only will channel the nation's wealth into foreign lands, but will fail to promote the industrialization of the Filipino economy because it will not help in the formation of Filipino capital.

..... We are rich in natural resources, and with such an ample source of readily available labor from which to draw for our industries, having in mind the principle of shift from occupations of lower marginal productivity to occupations of higher marginal productivity, we have every reason to expect that it is within our own capability to develop the national economy at an accelerated pace in the next few decades. The decision is for us alone to make. If we leave it to others because we admit our lack of political authority or of will power to decide on our economic policy and act accordingly; if we leave it to others because we believe that we cannot refuse their insistence on a joint economic program which can only mean a program geared to their own national interest, then indeed our task of seek-

²⁵ The Role of Labor In Our Economic Emancipation, September 9, 1957.

ing prosperity and strength for our country and people is futile.²⁶

* * * *

When I advocate industrialization I do not have in mind, as certain supposed economic saviors of the country do, only an industrialization incidental to a general concept of economic development based on a rural economy. This concept is diametrically opposed to the views I have espoused during the last five years. I advocate a real industrialization program, not one where industry would occupy a minor place in an economy still devoted to the production of raw materials for export, not a plan where industry is merely concerned with the assembly of parts or the bottling or packaging of imported products. I advocate an industrialization which would include heavy industry and from which would emanate progress in all directions, including the agricultural sector of our country.

Those who would camouflage the colonial nature of their economic thinking advocate industrialization but visualize this only as a result of agricultural development. I stand on the proposition that industrialization is and should be the starting point of our progress and development A predominantly agricultural economy garnished with a few minor industries spells poverty, unemployment, and the continuation of our colonial status, whereas industrialization and the eradication of the vestiges of a predominantly colonial agricultural economy is the only way out from underproduction, unemployment, and poverty.²⁷

* * * *

. Again and again, we meet with fellow Filipinos, or read remarks of Filipino commentators, that reveal

²⁶ Industrialization, the Only Cure for Our Economic and Social Ills, June 24, 1955.

²⁷ Nationalism and Industrialization, July 30, 1957.

an unclear understanding of the true meaning of industrialization and economic nationalism.

When some countrymen of ours argue, and I have met many who so argue, that it would be impractical for our country to industrialize because we are by nature an agricultural country, and that anyway we do not have the wherewithal nor the technological know-how to industrialize, we who have been ardently advocating industrialism are naturally pained at such misconceptions.

Industrialism, of course, roughly refers to a state of culture and manner of producing and consuming goods of a national society wherein industries and industrial processes predominate. To give a simple, concrete illustration of the several parts of the definition just made, one may say that if in a nation the general level of living is such that most of the people eat, say puffed rice and cream for breakfast, and both the puffed rice and cream are finished products of the country, and when heated just before serving, these are placed on an electric range all parts of which are of local manufacture, and the majority of grown-ups who eat the breakfast earn their livelihood working in factories owned mostly by their fellow citizens or in business enterprises that are also mostly owned by fellow countrymen, then that nation may be said to have attained a fairly high degree of industrialization. It is already living in a culture of industrialism.²⁸

* * * *

From the early days of the American occupation up to July, 1946, it was inevitable that America should control the economic policy of our country. The American Tariff Act of 1909 establishing a so-called "free trade" between the United States and the Philippines, was a bilateral preferential free trade intended to protect American

²⁸ Industrialism and Economic Nationalism, October 3, 1959.

business interests in this country. Its net effect, as everybody now knows, was that, because of the immediate profits it derived from certain privileged export articles like sugar, hemp, and copra, the Philippines has to this day remained a producer of primary or raw materials for export to the United States, depending entirely on the American market for said export products. Whatever thoughts of industrialization cropped up now and then were soon discouraged. That policy, whatever the intention behind it might have been, has proved disastrous to our economy.

The proclamation of independence did not alter the chartered course. On the contrary, more effective measures to implement the existing policy were adopted. The Bell Act, which the American Congress passed in 1946, not only continued gearing the agricultural economy of the Philippines to the industrial economy of the United States, but it gave parity to American citizens in the nation's natural resources and public utilities as a condition *sine qua non* to entitle Filipino war sufferers to receive war damage payments, and deprived us of the power of independent action in sundry economic matters. The Agreement has been revised and certain restrictions affecting our sovereignty have been removed, but parity rights for the Americans were not only maintained but extended to all fields of business activity.²⁹

* * * *

A distinguished American writer said, in the course of a general discussion of Philippine-American relations, that "as the economies of the United States and the Philippines are largely complementary, and not competitive, both countries profited but especially the Philippines."

It is true that the two economies are complementary in the sense that the United States is essentially a manu-

²⁹ A Realistic Economic Policy for the Philippines, September 26, 1956.

facturer of finished products a portion of which is exported to the Philippines, while our country is in the main a producer of raw materials which she exports mostly to the United States. But to say that the two economies are complementary is not to say that the relationship has been beneficial to both in the same degree. In such a situation, the United States, as the manufacturing nation, has been always the gainer and the Philippines, the agricultural nation, always the loser. That is an unassailable postulate. Indeed, there is no case in history where an industrial nation was ever a colony of, or was subject to, or even on the same footing economically with an agricultural country. The industrial nation has always been the dominant nation and the agricultural, the subservient.

“No economist would say,” according to that American writer, “that free trade with the United States for half a century has not been enormously profitable to the Philippines and of permanent benefit because it made the past progress possible.” Of course what he meant was that no American economist would say such a thing. But surely no true Filipino economist will admit that a reciprocal free trade between an industrial and an agricultural nation has ever been as beneficial to the latter as to the former. Such arrangement, in effect, prevents the industrialization of the nation that exports raw materials and imports processed goods, and will keep it poor and backward indefinitely.³⁰

Parity Rights

This parity clause, it need not be said, is grossly unfair. This is, indeed, the first instance in history where an independent nation has granted to citizens of another rights equal to those enjoyed by its own citizens. The

³⁰ Our Raw-Material-Export Economy, June 26, 1957.

irony of the thing lies in the fact that were we to seek, for the sake of reciprocity, the same rights from the United States, we would be met with the observation, which is unanswerable, that it is not within the power of the United States government to grant any such equal rights to citizens of another country. As the State Department representative apologetically said during a committee hearing: "I feel they (the Filipinos) should not be forced to give American citizens special rights which we can not give to Filipino citizens." It would also be naive to think that the United States would ever agree to give similar parity rights to the citizens of any other country even if they had the constitutional power to do so. Representative Carlson was certainly speaking the minds and hearts of the American people when, on the floor of the United States Congress, during the discussion of the Bell Bill, he observed: "In all fairness, I think, we might ask ourselves if we, as citizens of the United States, would agree to the same requirement (parity rights) were they submitted to us by another nation."³¹

* * * *

Many of us believe that we are "independent". We are often complimented by our big "partner" in the "special relationship" that we are independent. But he behaves and acts towards us in a manner that indicates quite the contrary. He imposed upon us ten years ago the Bell Trade Agreement, together with parity. After nine years of Filipino opposition and agitation against the Trade Agreement, he finally consented to revise it, but parity has remained — nay, it has been extended to all fields of economic endeavor — far beyond its original scope in 1946 which was confined to the ownership and exploitation of natural resources and public utilities. No other indepen-

³¹ Our Trade Relations With the United States, April 4, 1954.

dent country in the world except ours has granted parity rights to the citizens of another.³²

Our Currency Dependence

One of our recurring economic headaches is the low level of our dollar reserves. That we need dollars is a fact, but we should not be over-dependent on the dollar, we should not be morbidly dollar-conscious. The interest which other countries have shown in our products proves that we could develop other markets and expand our trade with them if only we did not insist on dollar payments. Those countries who want to buy from us also have goods which we could use. Only our fear of untying ourselves from Mother America's economic apron-strings prevents us from developing more profitable trade relations with other countries. Of course, certain foreign interests which may be adversely affected by our new outlook would try to exert pressure on our government to scrap such a plan. That is only natural, but the danger is that a leadership that is not nationalistic might bow to such pressure. This is what has been happening in the past. But a leadership which sincerely proclaims its adherence to the principle of economic nationalism will push ahead resolutely with only one purpose in mind — the well-being of the Filipino people, now and in the future.³³

* * * *

Although it must be admitted that there is need for dollars for the importation of capital goods from abroad, it should not be overlooked that in any industrialization we have to depend mostly on internal financing. The reason is obvious. For payment of wages, which constitutes the bulk of the cost of production, and of raw materials locally produced, we use our currency. We only need dollars or

³² A Realistic Foreign Policy for the Philippines, August 18, 1956.

³³ The Role of Labor in Our Economic Emancipation, September 8, 1957.

yens or pounds for foreign purchases. I am afraid we have become unduly dollar-conscious, as if our economy depended under all circumstances on the dollar. That is, I believe, a mischievous error, obviously inspired and fostered by those who will benefit from our continued dependence on the dollar. It is, therefore, necessary to emphasize the fact that in any economic development the chief instrument of the entrepreneurs is the local currency — the peso, in our country — and not the dollar.³⁴

Foreign Loans, Not Foreign Investments

Capital is always necessary in economic development. Other things being equal, the greater the capital the larger the production and the faster the rate of economic growth. In our present state, considering the scarcity of Filipino capital, there is need for foreign capital if we expect any acceleration in our economic development. But the foreign capital we need is for the purchase of capital goods which we cannot produce or manufacture locally. Foreign capital in excess of what is necessary to meet this particular need will do us more harm than good.

I have repeatedly stressed my preference for foreign loans at reasonable rates of interest. They are not a substitute for internal financing, but merely a complement to it, and will take care only of those functions that internal financing cannot at present perform, such as the procurement of capital goods. But under any and all circumstances, foreign loans should be preferred to foreign direct investments because the latter mean foreign ownership of the business and the profits.³⁵

* * * *

Our opposition to foreign direct investments is not, I repeat, the result of a purely emotional nationalism. In

³⁴ Economic Nationalism, March 28, 1957.

³⁵ The Need of Foreign Loans in Our Economic Development Program, May 18, 1960.

fact, such a chauvinistic attitude devoid of all economic substance could even prove harmful in some cases. That economic substance may be simply described thus: industrialization of the country by Filipino capitalists, and not simply the prevention of industrialization by foreign capitalists; exploitation of our natural resources by Filipino capital; development and strengthening of Filipino capitalism, not of foreign capitalism; increase of the national income, but not allowing it to go mostly to non-Filipinos.³⁶

The Difference Between Foreign Loans And Foreign Investments

Here it is necessary to explain briefly the difference between foreign loans, public and private, and foreign direct investments. When we borrow money from abroad, say from the United States, to use for our economic development, the Filipinos become the capitalists. They will pay interest to their foreign creditors, but through the use of credit they would make profits well above the interests they will have to pay. Thus our capitalists would retain the profits. On the other hand, if foreigners export here their direct investments, they naturally reap all the benefits and, if allowed to do so, they would take them away from the country. Outside, therefore, of wages paid to our workers and taxes paid to the government, all the fruits of our economic efforts and natural resources would go to foreign capitalists, not to our own. In short, foreign loans are what we need, not foreign direct investments which would in the long run strangle us economically.³⁷

Why Foreign Direct Investments Can Not Bring Prosperity

Even if foreign direct investments would afford some

³⁶ A Realistic Foreign Policy for the Philippines, August 18, 1956.

³⁷ Ibid.

employment to local labor, that would not help in our domestic capital formation because salaries and wages are, as a rule, all spent on daily needs and are not saved. They are hardly ever a source of capital formation. Inasmuch as profits and savings therefrom are the only sources of capital formation, those profits that belong to foreign capital can not help promote our own capital formation; consequently, there is no increase in our capacity to produce. We remain, in the end, poor and underdeveloped. When the foreign investors send home their income, capital, and savings, then we shall be back where we were before they were "attracted", perhaps in a worse condition, where we might even have to beg the foreign investors to keep their investments in the Philippines not to enrich us but just to be able to give some employment to our laboring class.³⁸

Parity and Foreign Investments

Parity opens the door to foreign direct investment. In fact, foreign investment constitutes the very motivation for parity rights. The wider the door the more easily such foreign investment would enter. And with the doors of Japan and the 20 Latin-American republics and the Colombo powers shut against foreign investments, the more they would be funnelled into our open door. Further enlargement of parity rights means something more: it will make it more difficult for us to obtain American loans. For why should American capitalists lend at 2% to 4% interest when they can earn more than ten times that amount in profits through direct investments?

It is well to remember again the experience of Latin America. The Latin Americans had no parity with the United States. It was the superior experience of American business in technique, organization, know-how, etc. — the

³⁸ Ibid.

result of a much earlier industrial development — which caused the displacement of Latin-American businessmen in Latin America and retarded the growth of local, native, industrial capitalism in that area. Our own need to protect ourselves from that superiority is greater than that of the Latin Americans because of the parity rights enjoyed by U.S. citizens and corporations in the Philippines.

As a distinguished Filipino economist pointed out on one occasion, “because of the overwhelming advantage in industrial efficiency which the United States enjoys, it would be impossible for the Philippines to achieve even moderate progress in industrialization unless some form of protection is afforded its infant industries.” The imperative need of the Philippines to protect itself from an economic invasion by one possessed of such “overwhelming advantage in industrial efficiency,” could not have been expressed more clearly. The task is admittedly difficult. The difficulty lies in the fact that a nation that accepts military protection from a stronger power necessarily reduces its political power to protect itself from its protector in other fields, as, for instance, that of economic competition.³⁹

The Example Of Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico has been presented to our leaders as the show-window of industrialization and economic development. Many have been invited to witness the prosperity of Puerto Rico. Indeed that country is rich and prosperous, territorially speaking, and is bound to become more so. But are the Puerto Ricans themselves prosperous? They are not, because the wealth of Puerto Rico is concentrated in the hands of foreign investors. Puerto Rico was challenged to accept an offer of national independence if the people wanted it. The “elected” representatives of the people over-

³⁹ Ibid.

whelmingly voted against independence. What will be our fate if our country became industrialized along the same lines followed and by the same method used in Puerto Rico? With foreign direct investments financing our industrialization, and with the economy passing gradually into foreign hands, not only shall we be poorer than ever but even our political independence would dwindle into insignificance. The fate of "prosperous" and willfully colonial Puerto Rico must be neither forgotten nor overlooked.⁴⁰

The Fallacy Of "Philippines First"

If "Philippines First" is accepted as a substitute for the "Filipino First" policy, the effect will be to grant concessions and privileges to alien residents to the detriment of Filipinos, on the specious proposition that as long as our national income and gross national product keep on increasing from the territorial point of view, Filipinos need not worry — they are rich on paper. To express it differently, provided the Philippines, as a geographical unit, is wealthy and prosperous, Filipinos should not mind if they themselves remain poor and destitute, with most of the national wealth in the hands and coffers of resident aliens.

It is unfortunate, but we have to be constantly reminded that under the present economic setup, which the "Filipino First" policy seeks to alter, it is the aliens and not the Filipinos who have been the main beneficiaries of the country's economic efforts.⁴¹

* * * *

It has been argued that the nationalist's slogan in America is not "American First" but "America First" as in England it is "England First" and not "English First". There is no point of comparison here. Conditions in those countries are entirely different from those obtaining in

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Filipinos in the Light of the Canadians' Experience, March 20, 1959.

the Philippines. For one thing, the wealth there is not concentrated in the hands of aliens and there is little likelihood that it will ever be. "America First" and "England First", as well as "Japan First" and "Germany First", are safe slogans for the peoples of these countries because all such countries are highly developed, and there is no danger that alien interests could infiltrate to prosper at the expense of their respective nationals. Moreover, the political independence of those countries from foreign pressure has never been a matter of doubtful value. As a consequence, they enjoy economic independence. But this is not true of underdeveloped countries like the Philippines which finds itself at the mercy of rich, aggressive, foreign investors and the consequences of a so-called special relationship with a powerful foreign power.⁴²

"Filipino First" Policy

It has been revealed that the adverse effect of the "Filipino First" policy has been confined to some classes of aliens for the benefit not only of Filipinos, as intended, but mainly of certain aliens enjoying parity rights with Filipinos. . . . It would be most unfortunate if it should be so, because the "Filipino First" policy is not aimed at discriminating among aliens, but solely at safeguarding Filipino interests. I take this opportunity to state that, of all foreign interests established here, and as far as economic invasion is concerned — and speaking in general terms — the English, Spanish, Dutch, German, Belgian, and other Europeans, are the last to give the Filipinos cause for concern.

But if, because of the parity clause in our amended constitution, discrimination must continue in favor of a certain class of aliens with unfairness to other aliens and

⁴² Ibid.

to the detriment of the interests of Filipino nationals, our "Filipino First" policy must be carried on as far as the Filipinos themselves are concerned. In other words, "Filipino First" must continue to be the slogan of every true Filipino in every aspect of the national life, until parity is abolished, at which time the slogan shall be adopted in all governmental measures in the primary interest of our nationals and without discrimination among the different resident aliens.⁴³

* * * *

The "Filipino First" policy stands against any form of dominance whether by the Communists, by fellow-Asians or by the Western powers. What we want is true, real independence — the substance of freedom, not merely its shadow or its name. When the big powers nationalize their banks or jealously implement their immigration laws barring aliens from entering their territories, we all agree that those acts constitute a legitimate exercise of sovereign rights. But when small nations try to assert even the most elementary rights of sovereignty, they arouse the ire of the great. Is it that small nations are only as sovereign as the big powers will allow them to be?⁴⁴

* * * *

We cannot attain prosperity and happiness as a people unless our political independence is complete, because without complete freedom of action we could never adopt our own policies conducive to those ends. Policies formulated or influenced by others will always be for the benefit and interest of those others. This is the reason for our delayed program of industrialization; this is the reason why our exports continue to be for the greater part raw materials, the prices of which are dictated by foreign car-

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ The True Ultra-Nationalists, June 4, 1959.

tels, while our imports, which far exceed our exports, continue to be in the main manufactured goods; why, in short, we have maintained too long an agrarian economy with its inevitable train of unemployment, mass poverty, and social injustice.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Philippine-American Relations, February 16, 1957.

PART THREE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

For many years, the nation has stood on artificial props. We have allowed alien and beguiling forces to chart for our people a course that does not lead to the realization of their legitimate aspirations. We have been made to fear new ideas, to abhor independence of thought and action, to shun examples, precedents, and experiences of other peoples that have attained their goals. We have been basking in the feeling that all is well with us and that all good things will come to us under the protection of powerful friends. So we have come of age with frail limbs and a lethargic mind, unable to stand on our own feet or to think for ourselves, light-hearted and complacent in an attitude of dependency, with our most vital problems, such as national security and survival and economic reconstruction, left in the hands of a guardian who has to look after his own more numerous and perplexing problems.¹

¹ Our Political Parties Before the Bar of History, April 17, 1960.

The Inter-Relationship Between Foreign And Domestic Policy

There are two sides to a nation's policy: the domestic and the foreign. They should be not only mutually consistent but complementary, or they would cancel each other. The domestic policy, however, should be paramount. The foreign policy is but an extension, an adjunct, an implementation of the domestic policy. The Constitution dictates, and true statesmanship requires, that domestic policy should always be predicated upon the welfare, happiness, and prosperity of the people. That means suppression of poverty, reduction, even if gradual, of unemployment which at the moment is unforgivably high, decent standard of living; and these in turn mean industrialization and an unobstructed national freedom to formulate and implement a program in which capital assets, i. e., the instruments of production, are owned by our own people, individually whenever possible, nationally whenever necessary.

It is pathetic that for over a decade our domestic policy has been subordinated to our foreign policy, or what passes for that, in our dealings with other countries. It is only in the sense that our external policy is the product of foreign interference that it may be called foreign. And this is the sort of foreign policy to which our domestic policy has been subordinated. And because of that, and in that sense alone, our domestic policy has become foreign too. **If we make an honest and realistic appraisal** of the national policy during the post war years on the basis of its results, what do we find? Parity rights in the utilization and enjoyment of our natural resources, with appropriate amendment of the Constitution to guarantee, perhaps forever, these rights; 99 year lease of bases with ex-

tratrerritorial privileges; Bell Trade and Quirino-Foster Agreements; dependence on one single market for imports and exports; invasion of the economic field by foreign private investments, and with them underproduction, lopsided economy, foreign exchange shortage, bankruptcy, corruption, unemployment, and mass poverty.

We must reverse this course, if the nation is to survive, by subordinating the foreign to the domestic policy, by freeing ourselves from foreign dictation, by maintaining trade relations with any country irrespective of its ideologies, political institutions, and form of government, whenever such relations would prove beneficial to us, by industrializing with our own capital, generated from our savings and supplemented by foreign loans.²

No Sentimentalism In The Conduct Of Foreign Relations

I believe that . . . sentimentalism and emotionalism should not be allowed to play a part in the consideration of matters affecting international relations.³

* * * *

It is folly to expect that any other nation will ever sacrifice its welfare and security to pure idealism or to sentimental attachments. As Filipinos, we must look out for ourselves, because no one else will. That is the very essence of our independence.⁴

* * * *

The truth is that, whether it can be properly called "blackmail" or not, international relations must still be conducted on the basis of *quid pro quo* and for the national interest.⁵

² The Trade Between the Free World and the Communist World, July 6, 1958.

³ A Realistic Foreign Policy for the Philippines, August 18, 1956.

⁴ Commencement Address, Luzonian Colleges, Lucena, April 24, 1951.

⁵ Ibid.

A Realistic Foreign Policy

To be realists, we must free our minds from our habits of complacency and the foolish illusion that we play a big role in the international game of politics as if we were ourselves a great power, and that our national leaders can talk of war with as much bravado as Dulles, Eden, Bulganin, or Nasser, who, after all, has the Suez Canal, the Middle East oil, and the whole Arab world to back him up.

To be realists, we must cease believing that there is such a thing as altruism among nations, because, as that great realist George Washington counseled the American people in his political last will and testament known as his *Farewell Address*: “*It is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; and by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.*” (Recto’s italics)

To be a realist is to subscribe to the proposition that in a world where the nation-state system still prevails every state takes care of its own national interests, and it is the responsibility of the government to determine what those interests are, especially those of lasting nature, and to adopt and carry out the necessary policies towards safeguarding them, sacrificing if necessary the more transitory interests, as, for instance, temporary trade advantages, in the same way that the good strategist foregoes a battle to win the war.

To be a realist is to accept the fact that it is to serve her own self-interest and to safeguard her security as a

nation and her position as a world leader, and only incidentally for our protection, that America has built up her imposing military and diplomatic establishments in our country, and it is only in that sense that the words "common defense," "mutual security," and "partnership" must be understood.⁶

* * * *

Our problems have changed with the change of world conditions, and new formulas are needed for their solution. In meeting these problems, it is important to accept the fact that communist countries are what they are, not as we would want them to be, and that, as Grayson Kirk, President of Yale said, "in the field of foreign affairs, the essence of good statesmanship lies in the ability to protect the fundamental and persistent interests of the state . . . a constant reexamination of the forces of stability and change: and the shaping of policy to fit them."⁷

The Minimum Requirements Of Our Foreign Policy

Let me define what I consider the minimum requirements of our foreign policy.

The irreducible minimum is a legitimate government that believes in the reality of our independence, an efficient government that will know how to lead us along a course of self-help and self-reliance, an honest government whose credit will not be questioned by the world.

If economic assistance becomes or is desirable for such a government in the execution of its plans, I am confident that it will receive greater consideration and drive a better bargain from a position of dignity and independence, Loans and subsidies are a matter of business, not of charity, and we shall have a better chance to negotiate them on

⁶ A Realistic Foreign Policy for the Philippines, August 18, 1956.

⁷ Foreign Relations and National Survival, May 25, 1960.

the basis of equality rather than an illogical and unjustified belief in our special relations, and with the trustworthy collateral of an industrious and united nation rather than the shaky credit of a prodigal, corrupt, and incompetent administration.

In the field of our national defense and security, such a government should insist, again as an irreducible minimum, on the firm guarantees, unconditional assistance, and equality of rights that have been given by the United States to the members of the North Atlantic Alliance, to Australia and New Zealand and to Japan. Until and unless we receive such guarantees by formal treaty, we should make no enemies where we can make no friends and hold to a peace of prudence.⁸

Philippine-American Relations Must Be Based On Equality

I am genuinely concerned over the preservation of friendship and good-will between the Philippines and the United States, but this will not, I am afraid, be possible unless it is predicated on the recognition, in words and conduct, of our independence and the respect for our sovereignty. In other words, the change should consist in America's acceptance, in agreements and in practice, of our sovereign status.⁹

* * * *

Neither the Philippines nor the United States can build an enduring structure of friendship and mutual help on the quicksands of our present subservience. Unless we are prepared to believe that Filipinos are a race of helots, doomed by an inner fault of their own nature to accept with submission the humble role of hewers of wood and carriers

⁸ Commencement Address, Luzonian Colleges, Lucena, April 24, 1951.

⁹ Philippine-American Relations, February 16, 1957.

of water, and to play the inglorious part of hired janissaries, we cannot expect that they will forever be reconciled to being treated as puppets and satellites, instead of equals.

The American people, with their noble traditions of liberty and national pride, should certainly have no stomach for the flattery of sycophants and courtiers. They cannot lead a crusade for the dignity, the rights, and the freedom of men if they close their ears to honest criticism, if they are scandalized and frightened by every disagreement, and if they hold that those who do not obey blindly are against them.

For our part, I think that we have too long allowed our domestic distresses and economic difficulties to obscure and depreciate the rights we gained with independence. We have devalued our freedom, and the result has been that we must pay more and more for less and less concessions.¹⁰

* * * *

If the United States has been generous to us, we have also been generous, equally generous, to the United States, and I speak not only in terms of bases, parity, tariff preferences, immigration rights, and other unprecedented concessions, but also in terms of loyalty measured in the blood spilled in Bataan, Corregidor, and Korea.

Our relations with the United States have not been a one-way street but a two-way street, in which the traffic was just about equal.

I do not think the Americans, or at least the good Americans, will resent it if we speak frankly to them and tell them exactly what we need and want. I do not think they will be offended if we assume that they mean exactly what they say about the equality of men and nations.

¹⁰ Address, Manuel L. Quezon Educational Institution, May 4, 1951.

If there is danger of misunderstanding between us, it is more likely to arise from excessive and misunderstood politeness, the old-type politeness about which the Americans themselves were once wont to complain because we told them only what we thought they wanted to hear, and not the truth, which is what they should have heard.

It may be that there are still some Americans who wish to hear only what is pleasant, what is mere flattery, but I have no doubt that the vast majority of responsible, democratic, freedom-loving Americans are ready to sit down with us at the bargaining table as real equals, in a give and take between free nations.

In that give and take, I trust that we shall all remember, no matter from what party we come, that we represent the Filipino people, and that we shall guard and promote the interests of our country before those of any other.¹¹

* * * *

It seems that some people have gotten used to the habit of viewing Philippine goals as subsumed in America's leadership of the free world, so much so that when we demand the right to resolve conflicts between Philippine and American interests in favor of vital Philippine interests within our own country, we are at once reminded, in order to discredit our position, that we are following the communist line. Would it be unreasonable to ask that these conflicts of interests be resolved in the Philippines in favor of Filipinos, without pro-communism or anti-communism or any other extraneous matters being brought into the question? Can't we be sovereign in our own country and be a member in good standing of the free world at the same time?¹²

¹¹ On the Mutual Defense Pact Between the Philippines and the United States, Philippine Senate, May 12, 1952.

¹² The True Ultra-Nationalists, June 4, 1959.

Our Independence And American Self-Interest

The issue of independence was the crux of Philippine-American relations. The Democrats gave us the Jones Law, with its promise of independence upon the establishment of a "stable government". The Republicans who succeeded them left the promise unfulfilled. When, for purely selfish motives, the labor, dairy, cotton-seed oil, and the Cuban sugar and beet sugar interests were mobilized behind our crusade for independence, the American Congress passed a law fixing the time for the proclamation of our independence and allowing us to formulate a Constitution and establish a Commonwealth. But a Republican President vetoed it, and it was only when the Democrats rose to power that those powerful pressure blocs and the determined efforts of the Filipino leaders succeeded in having the bill reenacted and finally made into law, although not without the same strangling economic clauses and military and naval bases impositions.

There were for sure in the United States noble and generous spirits behind that struggle, but it was the economic pressure blocs, which dreaded Filipino competition, that in the end made possible the withdrawal of United States sovereignty from the Philippines. The American colonial adventure in the Far East had proved to be bad business for some American industrial tycoons and a liability for the labor unions of the Pacific Coast.

The whole of our modern history, the whole of our national campaign for independence, belie, therefore, the grossly inaccurate generalization of the foreign office spokesman.¹³ Indeed, there is no better evidence of the need for formal commitments and guarantees than our

¹³ The Quirino Administration was in office during this period.

experience with the varied fortunes of the nation's struggle for independence.¹⁴

* * * *

For their part, the Americans did not hesitate to demand the most formal and binding written guarantees that their own national interest would be respected, and their economic and military requirements fully satisfied. They were not content with statements and declarations. The grant of military and naval bases was made a mandatory provision of the Independence Act; it had to be pledged by legislative resolution before independence was actually granted and was later embodied in a binding treaty for 99 years. Tariff exemptions for American goods and currency restrictions on the peso were likewise enacted in the Bell Act, which had to be formally accepted by Act of Congress, and in a written executive agreement with carefully detailed protocols and schedules; while our Constitution, saddled from the very beginning with an obligatory ordinance protecting American rights, had actually to be amended to assure the concession of unilateral parity to the Americans.

When the Americans themselves, throughout our long relations with them, and with all their admitted friendliness, have required formal and explicit commitments in writing, and even the enactment of internal legislation and the amendment of our fundamental law, to evidence and enforce their rights, why should we be less prudent, vigilant, and solicitous of our national interest?¹⁵

Our Mendicant Foreign Policy

Yet our foreign policy was conducted from the very beginning, and is being pursued, on the erroneous assumption of an identity of American and Filipino interests, or

¹⁴ Guarantees for "Permanent Security," June 15, 1951.

¹⁵ Ibid.

more correctly, of the desirability, and even the necessity, of subordinating our interests to those of America. Thus, on the fourth of July, 1946, it was announced that our foreign policy would be to follow in the wake of America. We have, indeed, followed. We followed America out of Spain and back again; we followed America in her aimless pilgrimage in the Holy Land, from Jew to Arab and Arab to Jew, as the American need for Arab Oil and the American administration's desire for Jewish votes dictated; we recognized the independence of Indonesia when America did, and not one moment before. In the world parliament of the United Nations, it is no more difficult to predict that the Philippines will vote with the American Union than that the Ukraine will vote with the Soviet Union. American policy has found no more eloquent spokesman and zealous advocate, and Russian policy no louder critic and more resourceful opponent, than the Philippines. Americans may disagree violently with their own foreign policy, but it has no better supporters than the Filipinos.¹⁶

The Recto Stand Vis-A-Vis The United States

As everybody knows, I am opposed to the Bell Trade Act and favor its abrogation; I am opposed to the 99-year lease of bases and favor a drastic revision of the agreement; I am opposed to the presence of American advisers in our various government offices and favor the abrogation of the Quirino-Foster Agreement; in general, I am opposed to the kind of "special relationship," unequal and inequitable, which we maintain with the United States.¹⁷

Postwar Reimposition Of Economic Control

The war years and the rigors of enemy occupation gave us an opportunity to reassess our needs and our cap-

¹⁶ Our Mendicant Foreign Policy, April 17, 1951.

¹⁷ Sovereignty and Nationalism, November 6, 1955.

abilities as well as our policies, to bring out the best in our own initiative, and to strengthen the national character. Many realized for the first time in those trying days that we could stand on our own feet if only we exerted the necessary effort and made a fresh start on a more independent basis, politically and economically, after the war was over.

But the popularity of G. I. Joe, his jeeps, his cigarettes, and his candy bars, the early handouts of canned goods and used clothing, rekindled within us the dying embers of the old colonial beliefs. Flushed with the excitement of MacArthur's dramatic return, the people did not detect beneath the surface of magnanimity the same old imperialistic policies at work, slipping round our necks once more the leash of economic control.¹⁸

* * * *

We are independent, but beggars of foreign favors; citizens of a republic but with the habits and mentality of colonials.¹⁹

Self-help Before Outside Help

The western European democracies approached the problem of securing American assistance, as the Americans themselves desired, on the basis of self-help before outside help, and, as a result, the ECA agreements which they signed did not vest in the United States any right to intervene or dictate in their domestic affairs. They were treated as equals because they acted as equals. For our part, we have approached the problem in the belief that we could secure assistance only by submitting to the conditions of a colonial status; we have accepted American dictation without protest even in the enactment of our

¹⁸ Our Political Parties Before the Bar of History, April 17, 1960.

¹⁹ Quezon, Architect of Our Freedom (Funeral Oration), July, 1946.

revenue statutes and social legislation, returning willingly to the days of dollar diplomacy when one Latin-American republic after another was compelled to entrust the collection of its customs duties to American officials or their delegates.

What we have failed to understand and to use as basis for our negotiations for assistance is the primordial fact of the world of 1951, that America needs her allies just as much as her allies need her, and that she cannot afford to allow them to slide into the economic chaos where Communism flourishes. Instead, in a veritable panic, we have chosen to take the easy downward path back to the days of colonialism.²⁰

Why We Are Taken For Granted

From the day of the proclamation of our independence, we have followed under this administration²¹ a foreign policy of masochism; we have taken delight in the injuries and indignities inflicted upon us by others. We have acted as if we did not believe in our independence, or care to enforce it and defend it, at least vis-a-vis the United States.

For their part, the Americans have been assured, so loudly and so often, by the administration of our unqualified trust in America that they had every reason to believe that once again we would submissively follow their commands and be content with face-saving rhetoric and empty promises for local political purposes.²¹

* * * *

I should think that in such a bewildering world, where, it seems, friends can so suddenly turn indifferent

²⁰ Commencement Address, Luzonian Colleges, Lucena, April 24, 1951.

²¹ Elpidio Quirino was President during this period.

²² The Administration's Sabotage of Japanese Reparations, August 3, 1951.

if not hostile, and former enemies so unreasonably be hailed as allies and proteges, depending on their fluctuating values in the market of power politics, we would all be a little tired of always being taken for granted, of always depending on the so-called generosity of others.

Let us take heart and play the part of an independent nation, which, I presume, we are.²³

* * * *

If our foreign policy could not be any different, then all of our nationalists of the past half century, from Mabini to Quezon, were guilty of a gross mistake, and our people, who raised them to power by near unanimity, were equally guilty of a historical injustice against those repudiated Filipino Federalists who thought that the Philippines would be better off if she became a state in the American Union.

But as long as we are an independent Republic, we can and should act as a free people and as Filipinos. As Filipinos, we must profess and declare that the security of our nation is paramount, and as a free people, we must profess and declare that, while the liberties of other peoples are important to us in this world of interdependence, our first duty is to our own.²⁴

Against Provocative Entanglements

Time and again I have consistently opposed dangerous and provocative entanglements. They distract our attention from our own local problems which are of the gravest and most urgent; they dissipate our already limited strength and energy which we need so much to establish our political, social, and economic security; and, what is

²³ On Concurrent Resolution No. 33 Terminating the State of War with Japan, Philippine Senate, May 21, 1952.

²⁴ Our Mendicant Foreign Policy, April 17, 1951.

worse, they expose our people to the fearful consequences of another war, a war which will be fought on Asian soil with only expendable and bewildered Asians for sacrificial victims on the altar of power politics and international intrigue.²⁵

* * * *

We have become victims of our own propaganda which we pompously call "psychological warfare". . . . Like a small dog, we go tagging along behind Uncle Sam wherever he goes in Asia, barking here and there at the Communists, with our little, almost inaudible, bark. Of course, the enemy knows that "our bark is worse than our bite" and so far we have not produced any reaction except perhaps some annoyance.²⁶

* * * *

What I am against is our getting involved in every mess in which the United States chooses to involve herself in Asia. We have enough cares to worry about in our own country; we have what the President²⁷ correctly referred to in the beginning of his administration as our "home work". Our "home work" is still unfinished, it has hardly begun, and we cannot finish it because we are busy meddling with our neighbors instead of minding our own business.²⁸

* * * *

Let us learn the lessons of adversity and disillusionment. When we were a young and subject nation, it was perhaps natural for us to think and act in obedience to the admonitions of those who, by virtue of sovereignty, assumed the right to decide what was best for us; but,

²⁵ The Election Issue of "Anti-Americanism" in the 4th Senatorial District in 1921, July 28, 1955.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Recto refers to President Magsaysay.

²⁸ The Election Issue of "Anti-Americanism" in the 4th Senatorial District in 1921, July 28, 1955.

now that we are emancipated, we should cast off the habits of infancy and tutelage, and think and act like men, so that in the future we may be treated as equals who should not be taken for granted, rather than regarded as children who should not be heard.

Let us also awake from the daydreams of adolescence, and cease to imagine ourselves as the saviors of a world in distress, riding out on fanciful adventures for which we have neither heart nor strength, while we neglect the care of our own concerns. We have no "manifest destiny" to fulfill, no "historical missions" to carry out in the age of superpowers. Our aims are simple and well-defined: to preserve the integrity of our national territory, to safeguard the independence and liberties of our people, and to promote their welfare by the enforcement of our rights and the fulfillment of our obligations. It is on this irreducible basis of national interest that we should build our foreign relations. For we cannot afford to sacrifice our primary objectives, as we have sacrificed them in the case of reparations from Japan, by indulging in "world commitments" and diplomatic errands "across the seven seas and all the continents." In the pursuit of this dazzling mirage, we may lose sight of our own national interests, and inebriated with grandiose visions of chimerical achievements, unwittingly surrender the vital realities to which we should hold fast.

Let us rather, like Voltaire's *Candide*, cultivate our own little garden amid the storms of the world, and live in it, free and happy, subject to none in our humility and simplicity, without those heavy cares which only burden the great powers that aspire to universal dominion, and concerning ourselves only with what is our due.²⁹

²⁹ The Administration's Sabotage of Japanese Reparations, August 3, 1951.

A Foreign Policy Of Adolescence

As a people, we are now undergoing what I might call an emotional crisis which is, I hope, symptomatic of a national transition to maturity. We are, I trust, outgrowing, with all the customary pains, a foreign policy of adolescence, with all the self-consciousness, self-centeredness, naivete, and insecurity that the passing of puberty implies.

For just as not all persons emancipate themselves in reality from parental control upon attaining the age of majority, but some become self-reliant earlier in life whereas others continue to be dependent upon their elders for support beyond minority, so also not all nations automatically attain maturity upon the declaration of their independence, but must grow slowly and gradually to their full stature.

It is a painful process for both men and nations, full of bitter experiences and disillusionments. It is not easy to learn that, in this world, every nation must look after its own; that friends and teachers, no matter how generous or affectionate, have their own interests to consider, interests which, beyond a certain point, they will not sacrifice to our own.³⁰

We Must Rely Primarily On Ourselves

We all remember the words of wisdom we used to hear from our parents when we were young. "Learn to take care of yourself, as if you expected to become an orphan any moment" — they used to say — "do not depend on us entirely because we can only provide for you while we live; you will have to fend for yourself some day; when we pass away, we want to have, at least, the peace of mind

³⁰ Ibid.

brought by the knowledge that we are not leaving a helpless child behind but a man ready to face the world alone."

We, as a nation, should profit from this sage piece of advice. We are accustomed to be told by many of our own countrymen that America is here just to help us and that it would be giving her offense for us to speak of self-reliance and self-help. But whether that help is real or not, whether in the measure some believe it has been given or less, the truth is that we do not know how long America can or will want to continue playing the doting parent she is said to be. I beg to state again that American policy in the Philippines is but a part of her broader policy in South East Asia and the Western Pacific and, therefore, her concern for us will depend, as it has always depended, on whether it is to her well-considered self-interest to stay in this area or not. Let us not lean too heavily on such a precarious means of existence and such an uncertain guarantee for the future, lest we become orphans sooner than we expect and, not being prepared for such a contingency, find ourselves lost and bewildered in the midst of an unkind world. Let us heed our elders' admonition and, under God's care, learn to fend for ourselves now with that same courage and self-confidence that made other peoples attain greatness, that it may never be said of us that, because of our unreasoning and boundless faith in others, we have irretrievably lost faith in ourselves.³¹

The Myth Of "Special Relations"

We are a small, weak nation surrounded by the most populous races on earth, Christians among non-Christians, westernized in Asia, conservative in the face of a continental revolution, clinging to a high standard of living amid perennially starving masses, and yet unable, in

³¹ Foreign Loans in Lieu of Foreign Direct Investments, February 24, 1957.

an age of industrialization, even to feed, clothe, and arm ourselves.

Weak in numbers, we have compounded our weakness with disunity. Poor in developed resources and therefore under the necessity of pooling our strength, we have plunged into a fratricidal struggle for whose prosecution the government must waste fully one-third of its revenue, and which not only has rent national solidarity, but also has worked incalculable harm on the nation's economy. Still worse, each faction in the conflict has openly proclaimed its adherence to one or the other of the two great antagonists in another world war which they believe inevitable, so that if war comes, it is a certainty that we shall become involved in the most cruel and sanguinary manner, for our own people are already set, brothers against brothers, with unforgiving hatreds.³²

Unable to defend ourselves against foreign aggression, we have not only weakened ourselves further with domestic strife but also given cause and provocation for attack. With our boastful challenges, threats, and denunciations, we have become war-mongers without armies. And when our last remaining hope for peace and security lay in the continued concert of nations, and in the maintenance of international understanding so that all peoples would have equal rights to justice and security under the joint guarantee of the great powers, we have helped to disunite the United Nations and even found satisfaction in its conversion into a forum for the propaganda of power politics.

But what is beyond comprehension is that, having fought three wars for our independence, we have surrendered it without a fight; and while vociferating about the reality of our national freedom, we have acted as if

³² Recto here refers to the Huk rebellion.

we did not want it or believe in it. We are tied to the dollar without having any dollars. We continue to be dependent upon the American market without having retained any permanent right of access to it. We continue to be equally dependent upon American protection without any real guarantee that it will be timely and adequately extended.

The tragedy of our foreign policy is that, being an Asian people ten thousand miles away from the effective center of American power, our behavior has been that of a banana republic in the Caribbean. We have fed upon the fancy that we are somehow the favorite children of America, and that she, driven by some strange predilection for our people, will never forsake us nor sacrifice our interests to her own or to those of others for her own sake.

Though we may feel the deepest admiration and respect for the American people, for their sense of fairness and their spirit of self-criticism, their love of liberty and justice, their patriotic pride, their deep and constant concern for their world destiny, and their thoroughness in the enforcement of their rights, still we should not believe, and I think it is wrong for us to believe and to act as if we believed, that American policy can ever have any objective other than the security, welfare, and interest of the American people.

If we lived within the orbit of American strategic security in the western hemisphere, if the Philippines were situated, let us say, like Nicaragua, Alaska, Hawaii, or even Canada, we might safely believe that America would never abandon us nor allow us to fall, even for a short while, into enemy hands because she would be committed by her own vital, strategic interest to defend us even beyond our own ability, readiness, or willingness to defend ourselves. Whether she loved us or not, whether she ap-

proved of us or not, whether or not we were corrupt and inefficient and otherwise ill-behaved, she would have to stand by us for her own sake as she would have to stand by Peron's Argentina or Trujillo's Dominican Republic in the event of a war in defiance of the Monroe Doctrine.

Indeed, how many problems would be solved for all of us, how many anxieties allayed, how many perplexities avoided, if the Divine Geographer had only placed our archipelago in the gulf of Lower California or on the Atlantic seaboard of the United States! Then we might indulge with perfect safety our fondness for the American way of life, and beard the Soviet lion with trenchant phrases, or twist the tail of the Chinese dragon with provocative epigrams, in the assurance that we should never be called to account. Then we might sleep easily of nights in the warm embrace of American strategic necessity.³³

* * * *

We shall be told to have faith in America, that America did not let us down in the past and will never let us down. The very fact that General MacArthur thought it necessary to plead with the United States Congress to be "patient and understanding" with the Philippines, and "never fail them," implies that American concern for our people is neither unlimited nor automatic, that America's "patience" and "understanding," for one reason or another, have begun to wear out, and that we are in danger of America's "failing us." But we could have reached for ourselves the same conclusion if we had only studied the realities of contemporary history.

Surely no American can be said to have been a better friend of the Filipino people than the American President who signed the Tydings-McDuffie independence act, the

³³ The Election Issue of "Anti-Americanism" in the 4th Senatorial District in 1921, July 28, 1955.

late Franklin D. Roosevelt. Yet, testifying before the Congressional Joint Committee investigating Pearl Harbor, Admiral James O. Richardson declared that on the 8th of October 1940, more than one year before the Japanese attack, he, in his then capacity as commander-in-chief of the United States Pacific Fleet, had asked President Roosevelt directly whether the United States was going to enter the war. This is what Admiral Richardson testified under oath: "(President Roosevelt) replied that if the Japanese attacked Thailand, or the Kra Peninsula, or the Dutch East Indies, we would not enter the war, that even if they attacked the Philippines, he doubted whether we would enter the war."

It is therefore on the record, on the very pages of history, as the sworn testimony of the commander-in-chief of the United States Pacific Fleet, that even such a great and good friend of the Filipinos as President Roosevelt did not think that the United States would have gone to war to defend the Philippines at a time when the Philippines was still part and parcel of the American domain. America went to war only because of Japan's dastardly and infamous attack on Pearl Harbor. Now that the American flag no longer flies over our country and American sovereignty is not at stake, how can we be any surer that the Americans will fight and die for the independent Republic of the Philippines, except in what General MacArthur has called the national interest of the United States?³⁴

* * * *

If we are disappointed with the Americans, therefore, it is because most of our people have been completely mistaken about our relations with them. We have lived for a good deal of time in a fool's paradise, unable to outgrow centuries of colonialism and decade after decade of

³⁴ Address at the Namfrel Symposium, August 14, 1955.

all-pervading propaganda, and feeding on the illusion that, because of Bataan and our odyssey of resistance to the common enemy in the recent past, the United States will always have the same concern for our vital interests as if we were part and parcel of the American Union.³⁵

The Need For Formal Guarantees

Let us not deceive ourselves. When it comes to war and national survival, the American military mind functions precisely like the Russian, and in the delicate and comprehensive calculations on world strategy that absorb the leaders in the Pentagon no less than in the Kremlin, the Philippine factor must be counted in decimal points.³⁶

* * * *

The brutal fact is that the actions of the United States, like those of any great power, must still be dictated by strategic necessity. War with Communist China is considered at present a considerable strategic risk for the United States, and Chinese intervention in Korea from the "privileged sanctuary" of Manchuria is therefore tolerated. When the Department of State believed that Mao-Tse-tung was only an agrarian reformist and might become a Chinese Tito, the United States were willing to let him take Formosa. Now that General MacArthur has convinced the American people that Formosa is important to America's safety, Formosa is aided and defended.

But without a binding guarantee and a formal treaty, what assurance do we have, what "permanent" assurance, to use the words of a foreign office spokesman, can we rely upon, that, if and when we are attacked, the United States will consider us worth the risk of a third world war? Without a treaty of mutual defense, how do we

³⁵ The Administration's Sabotage of Japanese Reparations, August 3, 1951.

³⁶ The Coming Farce at San Francisco, August 8, 1951.

know whether, in the judgment of American planners and strategists, we shall be in the position of Formosa in 1951 and not of Formosa in 1949?³⁷

* * * *

The American people are not so foolish that they would go to war when they do not have to. War is a terrible business; war, in the words of an American general, is hell. Do we imagine that the American people would go through the hell of another war for our sake alone?

There is, I think, no closer association between nations than that between the United States and the United Kingdom because of racial, ideological, military, economic, and sentimental reasons; yet, when the United Kingdom was fighting for its life in two world wars, what did the United States do? It did not enter the first world war until 1917, three years after it started, and it did not enter the second world war until 1941, two years after it started in Europe, and only because the Japanese made the suicidal mistake of attacking the United States directly at Pearl Harbor.

In these two wars the British were allowed to be driven almost to the edge of defeat and annihilation before the Americans intervened. In both cases, America made her decision when she saw her vital national interests seriously threatened, and when she became convinced that a German victory would have put an end to her predominant position in the world.³⁸

* * * *

It would seem, therefore, that the only issue is how best to serve that "permanent security" of our own country. For my part, I hold to my original thesis that we

³⁷ Guarantees for "Permanent Security," June 15, 1951.

³⁸ On the Mutual Defense Pact Between the Philippines and the United States, Philippine Senate, May 12, 1952.

should require a formal, binding guarantee that, in case of an attack on the Philippines, the United States will automatically go to war in our defense. I hold, furthermore, that the best way to secure that guarantee, and indeed the only way compatible with our dignity as an independent nation, can be found, not in submitting to a virtual protectorate, but in negotiating a treaty of alliance and mutual defense such as that which the United States have signed with the North Atlantic nations, and which they have already offered to Australia, New Zealand, and prospectively Japan. . . .

It should be obvious, however, that this "permanent security" cannot be achieved by ambiguous declarations made by individual officials who are not permanently in office, and who, under the Constitution of the United States, cannot in fact make any binding agreements or declare war in the name of their people.³⁹

* * * *

It seems to me that my critics and I differ only in our approach to the problem of war. They would put commitment before guarantee; I would ask for guarantees before commitment.⁴⁰

* * * *

Our top diplomats may feel they can afford to take a chance; they may find comfort in words and pretty phrases; but we who have heard those phrases once too often, who know from personal experience that policies of big powers are subject to "mercurial oscillations", that promises can be forgotten, and pledges long delayed in their fulfillment, we are not so careless of guarantees as those who never felt the consequences of unpreparedness and the bitterness of being deserted and forsaken.

³⁹ Guarantees for "Permanent Security," June 15, 1951.

⁴⁰ Commencement Address, Luzonian Colleges, Lucena, April 24, 1951.

In that fatal hour when the Four Horsemen return, riding a radar beam or a guided missile with an atomic warhead, it will be too late to negotiate or to debate. In that world of chaos, littered with the final disintegration of the United Nations into separate sovereignties fighting desperately for survival, when the vast forces and resources of the United States will find themselves scattered and divided by the insistent demands of half the nations of the world, let us not have cause to regret that we failed to require guarantees when guarantees were possible and could be demanded and obtained; that, knowing what had happened before, we allowed it to happen again; and that we committed in our maturity the sins that might have been forgiven to us in the days of our inexperience.

Only the people can decide this vital issue, and I suggest that those who are responsible for the conduct of our foreign policy ask the people whether they prefer mere presidential statements and unilateral declarations to formal guarantees and a firm alliance. Let them ask the soldier who survived the Death March whether he wants to wait again in anguish for the convoy that never came. Let them ask the men and women in the occupation rice-lines, who fought for the miserable leavings of the garrison troops, whether pronouncements and doctrines and radio promises ever filled the bellies of their starving children, or clothed their nakedness, or gave them shelter.

Let them conjure up the spirit of those who were decapitated, burned, or buried alive in all the Fort Santiagos of the occupied Philippines, whether their last thought was not to marvel why they were denied the protection that conditioned their heroic loyalty and allegiance. Let them ask any Filipino who knew the agony of waiting whether he wants it to happen all over again.⁴¹

* * * *

⁴¹ Guarantees for "Permanent Security," June 15, 1951.

If it be true that peace is a craven illusion, national independence a dangerous myth, and universal brotherhood a dream of the weak in spirit, and if it be true that we must make war to find peace and learn to hate in order to understand the meaning of fraternity, then let us meet our fate with our eyes open, and not in the tragic folly of the wilfully blind, the self-enslaved, and the fanatic *kamikaze*, dashing himself to his doom in unquestioning devotion to the glory of a master power. If there must be war, let us be prepared for it with all the formal guarantees we can obtain, all the armament we can amass, all the allies we can enlist; and if we must fight, let us at least fight with some hope of victory and survival, not with the fealty of the serf to his lord, but as equals among equals, free among the free.⁴²

*"Let Us Make No Enemies Where
We Can Make No Friends"*

But no reasonable, no patriotic, no self-respecting Filipino can be content with promises to return, or relish a situation where we place ourselves in the vanguard of an atomic war, without arms, without retreat, without cover or support, destined to be annihilated at the first encounter and therefore rendered unfit for a belated liberation. If America really believes that war is inevitable, then let her give us in Asia a resolute leadership we can trust; let her give us the same unconditional pledges and guarantees and the same actual evidence of a spirit of equality and common fate that she has given to her kinsmen and allies in the Atlantic Community; and we shall have justification for the risk of war and incentive to make common cause.

Otherwise, we must restrain our enthusiasms, dissemble our sympathies, moderate our words and actions,

⁴² Ibid.

and in fulfillment of the primitive duty of self-preservation, make no enemies where we can make no friends, and hold our peace. It may be a precarious peace, of uncertain duration, at the mercy of military time-tables and power-politics; but if it is broken, at least it shall not be said that we sought it, and if we are attacked, that we deserved it. Meanwhile, we must, whether in the Sierra Madre and the Candaba Swamps, or in Aviles and Arlegui,⁴³ whether within or beyond the pale of present authority, forswear allegiance to any foreign power, and cease to fight the battles of one or the other of the superstates beyond our borders. Whatever our economic theories, social grievances, and political beliefs and affiliations, and whatever the future has in store, we must stand united, under a lawful and legitimate leadership, as citizens of one country, one flag, and one Constitution, so that if war comes, it will not find our nation rent asunder in a paroxysm of self-annihilation.

Let not Macaulay's traveler from New Zealand, exploring the spectral ruins of Manila in the course of his post-atomic war peregrinations, and cautiously testing the radio-active waters of the Pasig, from the broken arches of the Quezon Bridge, have cause to ponder that in those shattered tenements and poisoned fields and rivers once lived a nation unique in the annals of mankind, free men who put their liberties on the auction block, a sacrificial race with a mysterious urge to suicide, who, being weak and weaponless, took upon themselves the quarrels of the strong, and having been warned of their abandonment, still persisted in their lonely course, and whose brutalized and monstrously deformed survivors, scrambling with stunted limbs in the infected debris of their liberated cities, had forgotten even the echo of the memory of the

⁴³ Arlegui was the former site of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

strange illusion for which their race had fought and perished.⁴⁴

The Charges Of Anti-Americanism And Appeasement

I have been called anti-American because I have placed the national interest and safety of the Philippines above those of any other country, including the United States.

Because I counselled a policy of prudence and non-provocation unless and until we should be ready to face the consequences with a binding guarantee that the United States will go to war in our defense, I have been called a neutralist, an appeaser, and a defeatist. If these charges are correct and fair, then President Truman, Secretary Acheson, Secretary Marshall, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States may also be rightly called appeasers and defeatists, "on the side" of the Communists, because they have carefully avoided bombing the Manchurian bases of the Communist forces in Korea, even though American soldiers were dying by the thousands, so as not to provoke an open war with Communist China, and possibly with Soviet Russia, before the United States are fully prepared for it. Mr. Acheson, by this standard, is an appeaser because he has followed a policy of moderation and conciliation in Iran, which supplies the oil for the whole of western Europe; and by the same token Mr. Truman is a defeatist because he has publicly proclaimed his refusal to plunge humanity into a third and perhaps final world war.⁴⁵

* * * *

The trained soldier on the field of battle, persuaded as he may be of the justice of his cause, loyal to his flag

⁴⁴ Our Mendicant Foreign Policy, April 17, 1951.

⁴⁵ Guarantees for "Permanent Security," June 15, 1951.

and to his country, bound to his comrades by the ties of common peril, does not, for all his gallantry and for all the ingrained habits of unquestioning obedience, gallop upright into the valley of death like the Light Brigade of Balaklava one hundred years ago, not reasoning why, but only to do and die. The modern soldier knows that he cannot live on poetry and takes cover when he can; he advances with the caution inbred by deadly experience; he makes sure that his flanks are guarded and his avenue of retreat secure; and under attack, he digs in, he makes his "little cave of security" which he calls a trench, a fox-hole, or a firing-pit, and waits until he can advance under the cover and protection of a barrage. Such a soldier is not a defeatist, an illusionist, an appeaser, any more than a government that knows how to look after its own because it values the lives of its people as much as those of any other people, white, yellow, black, or brown. In this world, which, we are told, is a vast battlefield, shaken with the clash of rival armies riding headlong through the starless twilight of the human race, where entire peoples may be lost to history with only a last faint cry of unheeded protest as they go down under the hooves of the conquerors, may God grant our nation the wisdom and the fortune to arm and guard itself with every pledge and guarantee it can secure before it sallies forth into Armageddon, for history will not mumble even a perfunctory *requiescat* over the *kamikaze*-nation that, in blind animal obedience, shall dash itself into the mouths of cannons for the glory and the honor of dying that others might live.⁴⁶

* * * *

It is amusing to recall that, of all people, I was later to be accused of collaboration with the Japanese, the very enemy against whom I had warned. . . . It is equally amusing to think that I was charged with being anti-American

⁴⁶ Commencement Address, Luzonian Colleges, Lucena, April 24, 1951.

only recently. If there were any truth to this charge, it should have been made as far back as 1927, when I criticized American policies in the Philippines, particularly America's unpreparedness to defend us and her failure to prepare us to defend ourselves, with all the tragic harvest of defeat that was afterward reaped in Bataan and Corregidor. Yet it is only fair to add that, also as far back as 1927, I was expressing, just as I have been doing now, my trust in American power, and sustaining the proposition that the best foundation for peace in Asia and the Pacific would be for the western powers, led by the United States, to maintain the balance of power in this part of the world, pending the establishment of an organization of united nations to preserve the peace of the world without resort to arms.⁴⁷

The Bases Agreement Impairs Our Sovereignty

The Agreement purported to insure "the territorial integrity of the Philippines"; but by granting America extra-territorial rights in the bases, we surrendered to her the power, the jurisdiction, and the sovereignty of the Republic over portions of the national territory whose integrity is guaranteed by Article I of the Constitution. So the Agreement, instead of insuring our territorial integrity, accomplished the very opposite of its declared purpose with the impairment of our territorial integrity. The 99-year term, coupled with the fact that no stipulation for earlier termination of the same has been provided, had the same effect. Such an extremely long lease of territory is, for all practical intents and purposes, a perpetual lease tantamount to a grant in fee simple, an odious peace-time military occupation by a friendly country with immunity from our laws and our courts. A 99-year occupation of strategic areas of the national territory can

⁴⁷ A Chat on Past and Present, March 6, 1953.

never be justified. The military occupation of Germany and Japan by the allies, resulting from their total defeat in war and unconditional surrender, lasted only ten years. Britain got a lease of territory in the China homeland for 99 years after the Opium War, but that was the result of a war between Britain and China. In our case, although the grant of bases was also the result of a war — World War II — where we emerged crippled and ruined, the fact is that we fought on the same side with America not against her, and should have, therefore, shared in the fruits of victory instead of suffering indignities at the hands of our ally.⁴⁸

* * * *

If the Agreement, therefore, far from insuring, violates the territorial integrity of the Philippines and derogates from the national sovereignty, if it no longer affords protection to the Philippines but, on the contrary, exposes her to attacks of such annihilating consequences as those known in modern warfare, and if it does not serve to maintain the peace but rather the “balance of terror” in the Pacific, the Agreement should either be amended in order to serve its avowed purpose in terms compatible with our sovereignty and territorial integrity and present world conditions, or it should be abrogated completely. No other solution seems decently possible.⁴⁹

* * * *

There is now general accord among our people that both agreements were basically wrong at the time they were made, that they offended our dignity and impaired our sovereignty, and therefore the relationship they brought about must be junked and replaced with another based on recognition of and respect for our independence. It was partly done in the case of the trade agreement. It

⁴⁸ American Bases and National Freedom and Security, October 29, 1956.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

remains to be done, and for more compelling reasons, in the case of the Bases Agreement.⁵⁰

American Defense And Self-Interest

In 1947, and for some years thereafter, American bases in the Philippines were not necessary for our protection. The reason is simple. At that time, the United States was the strongest military power in the world and there was no prospect of an attack from any enemy that was in any way capable of challenging her. . . . With Hawaii, Guam, and Okinawa in her hands, and with her monopoly of the atomic bomb, she was invincible and, I might add, unchallengeable, in the South Pacific. The absence of U.S. bases in the Philippines would not have made her less so. Being America's friends, and having fought with her and for her in the last war, we could have at least put to good use the implicit protection afforded by the presence of an invincible ally in the vicinity without having to enter into military agreements in which we were on the losing end.

But not only were the bases unnecessary for our protection, they were in fact derogatory to our sovereignty. It was the Bases Agreement together with the Military Assistance Agreement, more than the Bell Trade Agreement and the Quirino-Foster Agreement, that revealed America's true concept of Philippine Independence. Because of those two agreements, America was able to maintain her military power in and over the Philippines, under the declared purpose in the Bases Agreement of "insuring the territorial integrity of the Philippines, the mutual protection of the Philippines and the United States of America, and the maintenance of peace in the Pacific," but in reality for the promotion and protection of America's eco-

⁵⁰ Ibid.

conomic interests in this region. We all know that the strongest arm of power is the military. Once military protection is accepted, the national security and the political and economic independence of the protected state are *ipso facto* given away. This may sound unpleasant but it is the naked truth. Our people are entitled to know the truth, and they can only get it from one of their own. There is no national security without national freedom or complete independence, for, in the words of Professor Lapswell of Yale: "The distinctive meaning of national security is freedom from foreign dictation." The sad fate of one who accepts the military protection of another is that he has no one to protect him from his protector.⁵¹

The Reality Of Our Military Position

In the military sphere, what is the reality in the Philippines? In a polarized world of Giant Powers we can be described as totally unarmed. Without weapons of war, our soldiers are just civilians in uniform. We cannot have military strength until we can provide ourselves with the weapons of war, and we can not manufacture them or expect to manufacture them as long as we remain agricultural. The result is that whoever we depend on for arms necessarily is in a position to dictate to us why, when, how, and against whom the arms are to be used. Thus we are deprived of the sovereign right to determine who shall be our enemy or our friend, or our ally, whom to fight, whom to fight for, and when to be neutral, with whom to trade or to exchange diplomats, and, in the words of Washington's *Farewell Address*, when "to choose peace or war as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel."⁵²

* * * *

One who accepts protection from another submits himself to dictation. . . . The galling and humiliating in-

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² A Realistic Foreign Policy for the Philippines, August 18, 1956.

cidents in military and naval bases in our country are only minor but inevitable consequences of our special relationship with the United States.⁵³

In Peace, Foreign Bases Protect Foreign Investments

In time of peace, foreign bases serve as protection for foreign investments within the country where the bases are established.⁵⁴

* * * *

If we deny that the purpose of the U.S. bases here is our "protection," because such protection is a myth, as suggested by Walter Lippmann, it must be clear that their true purpose can only be the promotion and protection of U.S. interests. Senator Confesor, a great pro-American, but also an uncompromising nationalist, saw it and denounced it in no uncertain terms in 1947 on the floor of the Senate. We can not fail to note that the Bases Agreement was signed on March 14, 1947, three days after the plebiscite on the Parity Amendment. These bases continue as the evidence and reminder of American power on and over our territory. Military power, even more than economic power, can be and is being utilized for political control, as I am sure every one realizes. Economic control follows as a consequence.⁵⁵

In War, Foreign Bases Act As Magnets For Enemy Attacks

In time of war, these bases take on their real military character, and there is where the problem of our physical national survival enters. Assuming that the United

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ The Problem of Our National Physical Survival, May 21, 1958.

⁵⁵ American Bases and National Freedom and Security, October 29, 1956.

States could protect its "allies" — a dubious assumption since 1954 as I shall later show — American commentators candidly admit that the purpose of these bases is not our protection against, but our invitation to enemy attack in order to protect the people in the United States at the cost of the lives of our own people. I realize that this is a rather strong statement to make, and that a responsible representative of the people should not indulge in any speculation no matter how well-grounded. But I became convinced that it was no longer speculation when the military commentator of the New York Times, Hanson Baldwin, a trusted man in U.S. military circles, who has been writing in the *N. Y. Times* on military subject for over 20 years, said in February 1957 (*N. Y. Times Weekly Review*, February 17, 1957) that the role of the U.S. overseas bases in the world — bases in the Philippines are among them — is to "act as magnets for enemy attacks, thus dispersing and weakening his threat to our (United States) cities and fixed installations." This he reiterated in a later article (*N. Y. Times Weekly Review*, August 18, 1957).

I am the first to admit that it is understandable that political and military leaders of the United States should devise ways and means of protecting the lives of their own people. If in a nuclear war they stand to lose 100 million in the first few hours of a concentrated enemy attack, it would be natural for them to try to minimize their casualties by diverting the attack. Overseas bases, like those in the Philippines, are precisely the diversionary objectives for such enemy attack on the United States.

That is the reason why I did not harbor any hatred, ill will, or resentment when I learned that the role assigned to U.S. overseas bases was to act as magnets for

enemy attacks in order to disperse the attack on the American population.

What I deplore and condemn is the way we passively accept the role of magnets or decoys to draw enemy attacks away from the United States and, like fools, believe in what the Jusmag Chief, General Nutter, said in his first press conference, that "strategic missile bases in the Philippines are for the defense of freedom in this part of the world." Ignorance of the true purpose of overseas bases of the United States is unpardonable now that American columnists and commentators and even military men have frankly admitted that the role assigned to these bases is to serve as magnets or decoys for enemy attacks. It would therefore take a very irresponsible if not a traitorous mind not to give the most serious consideration to the idea of permitting the establishment of missile bases in our country.

Without these missile bases, there is a chance that we might be spared, and we should cling to that chance, no matter how slim. With missile bases installed here, we are doomed; a few hydrogen megaton bombs dropped in, say, five or six separate areas, in five minutes from the time of their launching, would wipe out our whole population.⁵⁶

National Survival

We have to accept the view, be it to our liking or not, that every state is the guardian of its own security. "Let no one be so naive as to think," our own Manuel Quezon counselled us, "that any nation will ever fight for the Philippines unless it is to that nation's own interest to do so

⁵⁶ The Problem of Our National Physical Survival, May 21, 1958.

...If and when a nation does fight for us, she will not do it just for love."⁵⁷

* * * *

We are faced with the problem of our people's survival. I said that it is the problem of problems. If we must all die in a nuclear war, those whom we represent at least have a right to know why we have accepted such a sacrificial resolution. If, after they have been properly informed of the appalling consequences of having stockpiles of ballistic missiles and launching bases in their midst, our people should still want to commit race suicide to help America survive, then be it so. I can picture the last agonizing Filipino under the flaming clouds of a devastating nuclear attack gasping out to Mother America the famous deprecation that St. Augustine, the greatest Doctor of the Church, addressed to God perhaps in one of those trances when reason capitulates to faith: *Lord, if we are deceived, it is by Thee.* — Mother America, if we are deceived it is by thee!⁵⁸

The Need To Make Asian Friends

The international reign of law, under which a small and virtuous nation might hope to seek its peaceful development untroubled and unafraid, is yet to be restored. Humanity, prey to rival fears, cupidities, ambitions, hatreds, and sudden furies, is not yet disposed to submit its quarrels to conscience and to law. A nation such as ours, weak among the strong, small among the great, poor among the wealthy, peaceful and law-abiding in a world where both law and peace rest ultimately upon the strength of the strongest, cannot afford to indulge its prejudices and pamper its illusions. As we feel the protecting clasp of America relax and slip quietly beyond our grasp, our

⁵⁷ Foreign Relations and National Survival, May 25, 1960.

⁵⁸ The Problem of Our National Physical Survival, May 21, 1958.

people may well be troubled with the realization that America is almost our only friend, and may well look about with apprehension and dismay at so many neighbors and potential friends alienated by neglect and indifference or abandoned to the enemy.

God grant that we may know how to regain their trust and their affection, for we have need of friends indeed, and that we may learn to seek and find the enduring safety of the Republic not in the shifting favor and interest of the great and powerful but in the steadfast comradeship of those kindred peoples with whom we are united by the common conquest of independence and by the common resolution to defend it against a new spoliation.⁵⁹

* * * *

One important problem must be solved, however, before the various avenues of cooperation between the Asian countries can be opened. We must be wary of sources of information which could be the cause of misunderstanding among us. It is unfortunate that we should have biased sources of information about one another's political and economic lives. I would suggest the establishment of our own agencies of information. Asians should learn about their Asian friends through the eyes of Asian press correspondents. Thus, we would not fall prey to the machinations of those who would want to keep Asians divided and distrustful of one another.⁶⁰

Asians And The Cold War

It is quite obvious that the cold war and the armaments race benefit the big powers because government expenditures for defense bolster their economy, stave off new economic crises for them, and strengthen their hold on the

⁵⁹ Our Asian Foreign Policy, April 9, 1949.

⁶⁰ The Philippines and Asia, October 24, 1959.

small nations which are reduced to mere pawns on the international chessboard. But, for the young nations of Asia, like Indonesia and the Philippines, which need all their resources for solving their manifold problems, the cold war must end. Our hopes for economic development through industrialization, to abolish poverty and gain control of our destinies, can only be realized in an atmosphere of peace, real peace, not merely an armed truce or a temporary avoidance of war.

Asia now commands attention on the world stage. No one should dare underrate the power of Asia. If we, Asians, were united, we could speak with one voice and no longer would our opinions be taken for granted. And the world would be richer and wiser for listening to us because we would be the logical sponsors of the two highest goals of man — peace and freedom.

I have long believed that Philippine foreign policy should be oriented toward closer cooperation with our fellow Asians. In a speech which I delivered at the Arellano University in Manila on April 9, 1949, I criticized my government for its indifference to the struggles for political emancipation of our Asian neighbors. It is only now, after ten years, that, with the upsurge of nationalism in my country, our government and people appear to be more determined to become integrated into the great Asian family.⁶¹

The Need For Asian Solidarity

Since the advent of our independence and until the inauguration of the present administration,⁶² we studiously showed indifference to our previous position of honor as

⁶¹ The Asian Endeavor for Peace, September 25, 1959.

⁶² The Magsaysay Administration.

bellwether, at least, of the nationalistic revolution in Asia. Although already entitled and in a position to formulate our own foreign policy, our over-enthusiastic foreign envoys chose to echo and re-echo the sentiments and attitudes of foreign state departments on problems and issues affecting or involving our nation and our neighbors. This unfortunate tendency was, to say the least, the result of intellectual indolence which recoiled from any serious effort to understand the new problems of Asian peoples after the end of the last world war.

Filipino diplomats of vast pretensions but rather weak political followings in their homeland proposed for themselves the astounding task of "paul-revering" all over the Western free world to awaken it to the menace of Asiatic communism. It did not occur to them that there were any number of capable witch-hunters who had already preempted that role, and who had succeeded so noisily that they had nearly frightened good, peace-loving people into looking under their beds for communists before retiring every night.

The fact of the matter is that America has her own foreign policy which, by the wisdom or unwisdom of her administration leaders, is deemed by them as necessary and adequate to protect and promote her interest as one of the great powers. With much of that policy, any truly nationalistic administration in the Philippines can often be in full agreement as, for example, that part of her policy which seeks to meet and defeat any aggression by the communist powers. But, there are aspects of American policy which, if of dubious wisdom, might be logical and necessary for America, but with which the Filipinos, as an Asian people, need not agree, let alone identify themselves. If America, for instance, has a dislike for or disagreement

with a principle like "Asia for the Asians" as adopted by India or by Indonesia, she has a perfect right to feel so, and to say so, but not the Filipinos, unless we prefer, in this particular case, to follow or identify ourselves with Western thinking rather than articulate our own feelings on the matter and align ourselves with our fellow freedom-loving Asians in this great unfinished fight for self-determination and democracy, in this noble unfinished task for asserting racial dignity in this region of the world.

It is rather a vital matter for us, and I daresay for the United States itself, because "Asia for the Asians" is just now perhaps the most effective principle to go by in the search for solidarity among freedom-loving Asian nations in their continuing struggle against all forms and varieties of colonialism.

The search for Asian solidarity is not made any easier by the fortuitous combination in some parts of Asia, under the stress of the cold war between democracy and communism, of Asian nationalism and international communism in the struggle for complete liberation from old-style colonialism and, on the other hand, of Western democracy with Asian nationalism in some other parts of Asia in the struggle against aggressive, totalitarian communism. It is understandable that both communism and democracy seek Asian nationalism as an ally, each for its own purposes, of course, because this is the real force that has enough weight to tilt the scales in favor of freedom during this fateful epoch of world history.

But the difficulty in that search is not — let us say frankly — Asian-made, nor is it blamable upon freedom-loving Asians. No free Asian nation seeks communism as an ally, but Asian peoples seeking to emancipate themselves from old-style colonialism, if they cannot find sup-

port from any democratic power, have sometimes been forced by circumstances to accept in despair, resignation, or misplaced good faith, the unsolicited support of communists. This is the tragedy in Asian eyes, of Malaya, for instance, and of the nationalistic but non-Communist Vietnamese who have joined the ranks of the Vietminh in Indo-China.

The strongest basis, therefore, for Asian solidarity is a common united stand, against colonialism in any form, political or economic, from whatever source and direction, and by whomsoever imposed upon an Asian nation. And "Asia for the Asians" is the only principle they can understand because most of them are still suffering from the effects of the colonialism that first deprived them of the blessings of freedom a couple of centuries ago.

While all Asian peoples, I am sure, dread communism, and will fight it when it tries to enslave them, as the Chinese people fought against it and are continuing to fight it, there are quite a number of them who do not feel immediately threatened by communism but are, on the other hands, still incompletely free from Western colonial domination, if not politically, for sure economically. To these Asians, a Western-style policy that glosses over the reality of the older colonialism but concerns itself exclusively with an anti-communistic stand is not a banner around which they are all willing to rally and unite. That way does not and cannot lie Asian solidarity.

If America, therefore, is seeking to win the cooperation and friendship, not only of the Philippines and Formosa and South Korea, but of a united Asia, in the articulation of her leadership of the free world in place of the old, discredited "white man's burden," there is need for her, to my mind at least, to try to understand the mean-

ing and implication that we Asians attach to the principle of "Asia for the Asians." And the effort may properly begin by discarding the supercilious and patronizing attitude that "Asia for the Asians" is a "diabolical slogan" that must be junked, an attitude which is unfriendly and uncomplimentary to Asians, to say the least. Freedom-loving Asians correctly believe that it is not for any Western people now to decide for any Asian nation what principles of foreign policy it may adopt or repudiate. There may be individual Asians, or even important groups of Asians, who may still believe they are not competent to decide for themselves what foreign policy principles are good for them, and must needs seek the guidance of non-Asians, but the large majority among them, I daresay, have already emancipated themselves from such subserviency.

When free Asian peoples adopt a principle of foreign policy, especially if it be one that is the natural expression of their desires and feelings, like "Asia for the Asians" which has been the holy battle-cry to which the Indians, Indonesians, Burmese, Ceylonese, and emancipated Filipinos have responded with spontaneous enthusiasm, they are entitled to the presumption that they know what they want and where they are going, and non-Asians are not at all true to their publicly avowed concern for freemen's right to self-determination if they should impute unworthy motives to their Asian friends and fellowmen.

It is a requirement of friendship among men and among peoples that they respect each other's points of view, and where these happen to differ, for the stronger one to try to understand his weaker friend, for otherwise there would be the taint of imposition which, oftener than not, freezes the warmth of amity and engenders bitterness and resentment.

Our friendship with America and the American people, particularly, has been recognized by far-sighted American leaders as a good potential bridge between Asian peoples and the United States. This bridge will be of little value if, even before its ramparts are made firm and strong, they are suffered to be battered by the combined forces of arrogance, prejudice, and distrust.⁶³

* * * *

.... Asian nationalism has undoubtedly a western inspiration. In the classic spirit of Greek tragedy, western colonialism, by familiarizing the tyrant-ridden Asians with the ideals and institutions of western liberty and liberalism, wrought its own destruction. Our own history is witness to the fact that the Philippine revolution against Spain was awakened and inspired by the protests, precepts, and propaganda of Filipinos educated in Spain. Asia, in a very real sense, was never more European than when it revolted against Europe.

The West, however, surely to its own misfortune, was not disposed to grant to Asia the liberties which Europe enjoyed and so jealously guarded. In most of Asia, as a consequence, nationalism grew to regard western democracy as a hypocritical enemy, and turned an eager ear to the blandishments of classless, race-less, color-unconscious Communism. Thus it was that the Soviet system captured the nationalist movements in China, Indo-China, and other Asian regions, while it succeeded in estranging Indian, Indonesian, Burmese, Ceylonese, and other nationalist movements from western democracy. In our own country we have seen Communism take the lead in denouncing parity and the grant of bases to the United States, and to this extent Communism has appropriated a great segment of nationalist thought and spirit.

⁶³ Asia Is For Asians, April 10, 1954.

To my mind, the salvation of Asian nationalism can be found only in its reconquest, its liberation, from both western colonialism and the new Soviet imperialism. Asian nationalism, and that includes Philippine nationalism, will have no meaning if it continues to be a mere battlecry, a mere slogan, for either the East or the West. The only justification for Asian nationalism is the welfare of the Asians themselves, and that welfare should command undisputed primacy in our scale of values, above the interests of the western powers or the Soviet system.

Only when our nationalism is liberated from bondage to one or the other, only when we have followed the ideals of racial emancipation and equality to their logical conclusion, can we in Asia, and the Philippines, direct our own destinies and maintain our common freedom and prosperity.⁶⁴

The Future For Asia

I envision Asia and its immense territories and innumerable peoples as the true birthplace of a new world, just as throughout the past it has been in Asia that the greatest world movements have been born. Here, if we are determined to become the masters of our own destinies, we may give shelter to the embryo of a new civilization, and when the rest of the world has destroyed itself with the western inventions of atomic, hydrogen, and nitrogen explosion, we may hope, if we have managed to survive through wisdom and prudence, to rebuild for humanity a new home of peace, justice, and liberty.⁶⁵

* * * *

When the avenues of communication have been opened between us and when we have put into operation various

⁶⁴ The "Liberation" of Nationalism, The Gold Leaf Magazine of the University of Santo Tomas, 1950-1951.

⁶⁵ Asia Is for Asians, April 10, 1954.

projects which would enhance mutual cooperation and aid, we shall have begun mutual relations which we could expand into a network of multi-lateral collaboration. It will enrich each Asian nation not only economically but culturally as well. Finally, it will produce a truly united Asian bloc of nations which can be an effective force for peace and render valuable assistance to peoples who are still struggling for their freedom from foreign control. The future of Asia is what Asian peoples and leaders will make of it.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ The Asian Endeavor for Peace, September 25, 1959.

PART FOUR

DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

We must defend our democracy against the threat of totalitarian subversion, and we can defend it effectively only by making democracy a reality, by making it work for the people, by destroying the cancer that breeds in corruption, fraud, and force.¹

¹ How Our People Shall Choose, November, 1949.

Freedom And Democracy

I am for freedom. I am for democracy. I am for Christianity. I am for peace. I do not merely approve of them or suggest them. I crusade for them, and I have been doing my best to enlist our people in that crusade. But I also believe that I have learned enough about them to know what they really mean and to realize that often the words are used to cloak actions which are precisely the very antithesis of their true meaning. Colonies are acquired, colonies are governed, the independence and freedom of nations are destroyed, withheld, or curtailed in the name of liberty or democracy, or of so-called "manifest destinies." Likewise, civil liberties or the rights of the individuals have been suppressed or impaired in the very name of freedom and democracy. Soon after the Second World War, there was in the United States a three-pronged attack on labor unions, civil liberties, and communism, all in the name of democracy and, later, of freedom. The campaign spread and crossed the Pacific, and so the Philippines granted Parity rights, a 99 year lease of bases, and accepted a status as a virtual protectorate, also all in the name of democracy and freedom. After over ten years of watching the dexterous manipulation of these words, it should no longer be difficult for many of us to realize our appalling naivete.²

The Appearance, Not The Reality Of Democracy

One of the most cherished rights in a democracy is freedom of speech, and to all appearances we enjoy that freedom to the full. Our press have been called the freest in the world. Our political campaigns are conducted with untrammelled freedom of expression. Anybody can stand

² The Trade Between the Free World and the Communist World, July 6, 1958.

up on a street corner and call the President of the Philippines an incompetent old fogey, a power-mad oligarch, the assassin of Philippine democracy, the defender and protector of corrupt officials. People say it every day. They shout it out loud on Plaza Miranda in modes and styles of infinite variation. Some are scholarly and discreet; others are coarse and brutal; some descend to vulgar personalities; others soar to constitutional heights; but they all have the freedom to denounce and ridicule the administration.

And while there have been isolated attempts to intimidate these critics with personal violence, tape recordings, charges of pro-communist leanings, libel suits, military observers, and more or less disguised threats of persecution and arrest, it is difficult to pretend that the freedom of speech and of the press has been seriously or substantially diminished and impaired.

Is it then true that we are a democratic country in the accepted meaning of the word? In answering this question, we come face to face with a strange paradox of our democracy. The government seems to have discovered the secret of what we may call a democratic dictatorship. We are allowed to enjoy the appearances of democracy while its substance is stealthily being sucked away, and thus we are the happiest of serfs because we do not realize that we are serfs and believe ourselves to be free.³

Freedom Of Speech Is Only A Beginning

Let it be granted that we enjoy freedom of speech to a greater measure perhaps than many other nations in the world. Let it be granted that our press are truly the freest in our history with their daily exposes of graft, corruption, and oppression, and even personal failings of high government officials. But what is the purpose and justification

³ The Paradoxes of Our Democracy, September 25, 1953.

of this freedom? For freedom of speech means more than freedom to criticize. It must have a purpose; it must serve some end; it is not an end itself. Such a purpose can be no other than to enable us to govern ourselves wisely and well, expressing our grievances that they may be redressed, and our desires for justice, peace, order, and prosperity, that they may be satisfied. Freedom of speech is calculated to help the people select those among them best suited to achieve these great national objectives, under God and the Constitution.

If such be the purpose and justification of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and other similar freedoms, then we must admit that there is more deception and pretense than truth and validity in the proposition that we enjoy them. We may be free to complain, but what is the good of that when the government may hear but will not listen? We may be free to expose, but what is the good of that when the government closes its eyes, or stares without seeing what we expose? Freedom to speak is thus checkmated by refusal to listen and to act. We may accuse government officials of extortion and bribery and other corrupt practices, but if nothing is done to punish the guilty, our accusations have gone for nothing. We may deplore and denounce extravagance in government, but if the government unconcernedly continues to squander the money of the people, then our denunciations have been worse than useless, for they have only awakened suspicions and doubts that are not to be allayed. We may charge those in the seats of power with inefficiency, dishonesty, lawlessness, and the highest of crimes against the people, but if, when the crucial time comes for us to exercise our rights of self-government in order to change these erring and prevaricating public servants, we are prevented from doing so by force and intimidation, or our

will is subverted by fraud, then we may shout our heads off but we shall be "crying in the wilderness," unable to enforce our decisions as a sovereign people. Freedom of speech is thus only the shifting and uncertain beginning of democracy.⁴

*We Must Not Take Our Democracy
For Granted*

Are we ready to defend the freedom of speech of those with whom we disagree, of those whose concepts of society and political authority we violently detest? Are we disposed and willing to maintain the purity of suffrage even at the price of an adverse popular verdict? Shall we keep faith with the Constitution even though it may mean the sacrifice of our political fortunes or economic security?

Throughout the history of democracy, men have faced these questions and have seldom given clear and definite answers. In the 1930's, the German people, in their millions, haunted by fear of Communism, desperately eager for security, infinitely weary of destitution and unemployment, cast aside the Weimar Constitution and gave absolute power to a dictator, with all the disastrous consequences of such an injudicious choice. Can we, who believe in democracy and in the advantages of our Constitution over any other form and pattern of government, take for granted that our people, if put to the same test, shall always believe what we ourselves now believe, or that we ourselves shall always be true to our present convictions?

In our country, democracy is still an educational process. We must train ourselves in its principles and practices; we must help to train all the people by precepts and

⁴ Ibid.

emulation; we must risk unpopularity and misunderstanding to show the people the distant goals, the hidden dangers, the necessity of temporary sacrifices, if our democratic system is to survive. And this obligation rests more particularly on those of us who had a hand in the framing of the Constitution or who are vested with the powers of government it has defined and provided.⁵

The Duty To Defend Our Civil Liberties

I wish to point out that the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus⁶ has revealed another serious paradox in our democracy. We have seen that, although freedom of speech and freedom of the press may not be curtailed, the administration can, and may, and does, oftener than not, ignore and flout public opinion; but here we have a case where, possessing freedom of speech and freedom of the press, the people and the press fail to use them for their own protection! Surely this failure is even more ominous for democracy than the defiance and callousness of an arrogant administration. When citizens fail to demand the restoration of one of the most essential constitutional guarantees, when the newspapers waste their power and their freedoms and allow such a vital issue to slide quietly into obscurity and oblivion, either through inadvertence or through timidity or complacency, then indeed we are faced with a grave breakdown of democracy, where ancient liberties may be lost by disuse and abandonment, and where the Constitution is ignored and suffered to degenerate into a powerless formality by the very citizens it was designed to protect and shield.⁷

⁵ The Future of the Constitution, February 8, 1953.

⁶ Recto here refers to the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus by President Quirino in 1951.

⁷ The Paradoxes of Our Democracy, September 25, 1953.

The Basic Freedom — The Freedom To Rule Ourselves

When we look at the superficial freedoms that we are allowed to enjoy, let us not be deceived and lulled into complacency. We may enjoy freedom of conscience and freedom of worship to such an extent that our political leaders may proclaim from the steps of the altar the divine sponsorship of their mundane ambitions. We may enjoy freedom from involuntary servitude, freedom from self-incrimination, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures, privacy of communication and correspondence, and the right to assemble and petition, although we may not be heard, or if heard, not listened to. We may enjoy freedom of speech and freedom of the press, freedom to say what we think and to write as we please. We may even have the writ of habeas corpus restored and again enjoy freedom from arbitrary arrest. But unless we have the greatest of all freedoms, the freedom to which these others are contributory streams, the freedom to rule ourselves by the free choice of our rulers as a representative democracy, then indeed we have nothing. We have means without an end, we have the accessories without the principal. If we cannot freely choose the public servants that will run our government, then we hold all these other freedoms on sufferance, which amounts to not having them at all.⁸

Free Election — The Heart Of Democracy

All of us, whatever our political affiliation, have a non-partisan responsibility, a responsibility inherent in our citizenship, in the next election, and we should all endeavor to fulfill it in a civic and patriotic spirit without

⁸ Ibid.

regard to party interests or personal ambition. It is a fundamental duty that we owe to our nation, to our republican institutions, to the way of life in which we believe, to the political faith we live by, to ourselves and our posterity. We must make certain that democracy survives in this nation, and the living heart of democracy, of a representative democracy like ours, is no other than a free and honest process of election.⁹

* * * *

That is an objective that must be embraced in common by all our political parties, and pursued in a multi-partisan, or better still, non-partisan spirit. No political party, whether in power or in the opposition, can undermine electoral processes without answering for it sooner or later.¹⁰

* * * *

Many of us, in the heat of an election campaign, are apt to forget that when democracy loses, it is everybody's loss, and if democracy loses often enough, it may be lost forever. It is for this reason that I believe it wise to proclaim these truths again and again, now that we can still view the coming contest with essential equanimity and impartiality, having in mind not so much *who* will win it, but *how* it shall be fought, not for the sake of this or that political part, not in the interest of this or that political leader, but in order that democratic institutions may be forever preserved in this country.

Free and honest election is not just a political slogan. It is, or it should be, a matter just as important to the Liberals as to the Nacionalistas. It is and it should be important to everyone who believes in democracy, and to every Filipino who has at heart the permanent interest of our country and people.

⁹ The Problem of Our Democracy's Survival, September 21, 1952.

¹⁰ Address at the Namfrel Symposium, August 14, 1955.

Free and honest election is more important, indeed, than the victory of any political party no matter how strong is the attachment we feel for it, or of any political leader, no matter how truly good he may be. That is a very hard thing to believe sincerely, and harder still to follow in practice, because the desire for victory, for one's party or for one's candidates, is natural. But some victories can be suicidal, and a victory won at the cost of our democratic experiment would be suicidal both to the victor and to the vanquished, which means, to all the people. For when the faithful expression of popular will is no longer possible through the legitimate process of election, the only alternative that remains is political serfdom or revolution.¹¹

From Little Frauds To Big Frauds

We are accustomed to hear that before the war we had elections of which we could be proud. But as one who fought in the ranks of the opposition at that time, I can tell you from personal knowledge that the roots of election frauds reach into the past. What frauds there might have been were only on a minor scale and in many cases were exposed and punished; and certainly there was nothing of the mass terrorism to which we have been subjected in our recent experience. But the tendency to lawlessness, the inordinate desire to achieve partisan or personal triumph at any cost, were already there, albeit the culprits were not as brazen as they are now in the commission of their crimes. Now, they even boast about their exploits openly and demand their reward, and actually receive it.

The tide of political corruption continued rising over the years. Our people became so used to little frauds that they scarcely noticed when the frauds grew bigger and bigger, more cynical and more scandalous, spreading in

¹¹ The Problem of Our Democracy's Survival, September 21, 1952.

scale from the petty crimes at single precincts to well-planned and open assaults on the popular will in whole provinces and finally throughout the nation.¹²

* * * *

Let me tell you that in an election there is no such thing as a big fraud and a little fraud, a justifiable act of terrorism and an unjustifiable one, a reasonable irregularity and an unreasonable one. Some people are often misled into thinking that padding the votes in a few electoral precincts is reasonable, so to speak, because it does not involve more than a few hundred votes, and is also justifiable because their opponents are probably doing the same in their bailiwicks. Others may believe that, if only in self-defense or retaliation, one may resort to force and intimidation or other corrupt practices. Still others may argue that bribing the voters is not so bad as pointing a gun at them in the 1949 fashion.¹³

Every Electoral Irregularity Corrupts Democracy

But, while there may be degrees of evil — venial sins and mortal sins — all have the same destructive effect on the spirit of the people. Whatever may be the nature or extent of the irregularity, it corrupts democracy. Those who close their eyes to the misreading of ballots in one precinct may next approve and even practice the destruction of ballots in an entire municipality. Those who shrug their shoulders at the excesses of a barrio tyrant will be that much more ready to fold their arms when the terrorism is practised on a national scale by regular or private armies.¹⁴

* * * *

¹² Address at the Namfrel Symposium, August 14, 1955.

¹³ The Problem of Our Democracy's Survival, September 21, 1952.

¹⁴ Ibid.

What concerns us more is the grievous injury that is being done to the civic spirit and republican tradition of our people. We are running the grave danger that our people may become so accustomed to bartering their votes for false material concessions and boastful talks about our pretentious role in world politics that they will fall into the habit of ignoring true, genuine, fundamental issues. It is easier, perhaps, to vote for a bridge, or a barrio road, or an artesian well, or a President's brother, than for a principle and for the ultimate good of the whole nation, but it is fatal to our primordial purpose of founding here a true democracy. We run the risk of an atrophy of the national conscience, a hardening of the civic arteries that will promptly send our republic to its grave.¹⁵

* * * *

If we are to regain the essence of democracy, we must go all the way back. We must reform, not only a few criminals high in power and influence, and their unscrupulous retainers and hangers-on, but the voters themselves. We must reform ourselves, stripping off all the accumulated habits of tolerance, indifference, and complacency toward wrong, reawakening our capacity for indignation at the first attempt at invasion of our rights and liberties.¹⁶

*"We Can Not Leave To Others
The Defense Of Our Rights"*

We cannot leave to others the defense of our rights. We must do it ourselves. Because the elections in 1951 and 1953 were relatively free and honest, many of us have fallen into the error of believing that the next ones will be equally so. Because the elections of 1953 were super-

¹⁵ Bread and Circuses, November 10, 1951.

¹⁶ The Problem of Our Democracy's Survival, September 21, 1952.

vised by the armed forces, national and foreign, we are seemingly content to continue placing our trust in them, taking the course of least effort and sacrifice. That is, to my mind, a dangerous attitude, almost as fraught with danger for democracy as are indifference and tolerance toward fraud. No people have long preserved their liberties at the mere sufferance of powerful protectors. As I have had occasion to say before, a true democracy cannot for long survive under tutelage. If we cannot exercise our rights ourselves, without a soldier, foreign or national, standing guard over us, then we are unworthy of those rights, and we shall not keep them for long. What kind of a democracy is this that must be kept under military guardianship? What kind of an independent people are we that we cannot yet be emancipated from the parental control of the armed forces?

We must not fall into habits of dependence. The armed forces are not a political organization, or at least they should not be one, and it would be fatal if, through impotence, indecision, or indifference, we should place the fate of our democracy in the hands of any powerful group of men. Along that road we would be headed for fascism and dictatorship.

In our current concept of democracy, we seem to reverse the right process everywhere in the country. Many of us are obsessed by the feeling that democracy can survive among us only under the protection of the armed forces. What is it that has sapped our self-confidence? What has destroyed our old belief that we could rule ourselves? The last war has been blamed for many things, including the demoralization of our people and the decay of the republican spirit which placed its trust in the citizen and not in the man with a gun. But the war was over ten years ago, and surely we have sufficiently recovered from its effects to stand again on our own feet.

We cannot afford to entrust to anyone but ourselves the preservation of so fundamental a matter as our political rights Who shall guarantee that the soldiers who stood watch at the thresholds of the electoral precincts in 1951 and 1953, holding off civilian guards and private armies, will not trespass into the people's sanctuary in future elections to terrorize us into voting for the favorites of the men in high authority?¹⁷

* * * *

Emperors in the past had their praetorian guards who inevitably grew and evolved from being the servants of their master to being the makers of that master. The emperors of the decadent Roman empire, engrossed in the pleasure of tyranny, believed that they could ignore the anger of their people behind the shields of their praetorian guards, but the day was never long in coming when the praetorian guards sold the imperial dignity to the highest bidder, and changed emperors as the mood struck them from day to day.¹⁸

* * * *

Once it is established, as it is now beginning to be established, that the citizens of this republic cannot be trusted, are not allowed, or are unable, to exercise their fundamental rights except under the protection of the armed forces, then there is an end to the reality of our democracy. In effect, we shall be free only by sufferance, for we shall have created, in the manner of Frankenstein, a power greater than the power of the people.

The armed forces are placed by the Constitution under the supreme command of the President of the Republic. Who shall guarantee that, when the Commander-in-chief is himself a candidate in an election or is interested in its results for purely family reasons, the armed forces shall

¹⁷ Address at the Namfrel Symposium, August 14, 1955.

¹⁸ Bread and Circuses, November 10, 1951.

remain neutral and non-partisan? A secretary of national defense may be beyond suspicion, but he can either be bullied or changed overnight for one more pliable and ready to do the will of the appointing power.

And what is to guarantee that the armed forces shall always respect the will of a legitimate civil government? Already, I daresay, the thought is not uncommon in our military circles that only the army can enforce order, that the reality of power is in its combat battalions, and that, in a not too distant day, it can, and shall, and should, decide the victor in any electoral contest. It will be said that such a temptation will not assail a republican army, a citizen army, but the history of nations is full of such temptations that were not resisted, and were even joyfully embraced; for few men, particularly if they are sincere and virtuous, and apt to feel indignant in the face of vice and corruption, can resist the temptation of using their power to reform, by force if necessary, the society of which they will fancy themselves the saviours and the liberators.¹⁹

Separation Of Church And State

In the light of the provisions of our Constitution on the separation of Church and State, which are mere reproductions of their American counterparts as may be seen in McKinley's instructions to the Schurman Commission, the Philippine Bill of 1902, and the Philippine Autonomy Act of 1916, better known as the Jones Law, the first question that comes to mind is: should such provisions be understood solely in the sense that the State shall not interfere in the free exercise of religion, or should they be taken, as they should, to mean also that the Church is likewise enjoined from interfering in the affairs of the State?

The answer is that both the Church and the State are enjoined from interfering with each other's affairs. Mc-

¹⁹ Ibid.

Kinley's instructions to the First Philippine Commission— unquestionably one of the most enlightened documents in Philippine-American relations — provide not only that “no law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion” and that “the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession without distinction or preference shall forever be allowed,” but they also contain the definite pronouncement that “*the separation between State and Church shall be real, entire and absolute.*” This last sentence has not been carried explicitly either to the Philippine Bill of 1902, to the Jones Law, or to the Constitution. Such precaution, in my opinion, was not deemed necessary. The injunctions in the American Constitution which were incorporated first in the Jones Law and later in our Constitution that “no religious test shall be required for the exercise of civil or political rights” and, that “no public money shall be appropriated, applied or used, directly or indirectly, for the use, benefit, or support of any sect, church, denomination, sectarian institution, or system of religion,” proclaim, although expressed differently, the same principle which is, that the “separation between State and Church shall be real, entire and absolute.” In other words, there should be, not only freedom of the Church from the State in matters spiritual, but also freedom of the State from the Church in temporal or civil affairs. The U.S. Supreme Court spoke most appropriately in this respect in *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U. S. 1:

“The structure of our government has, for the preservation of civil liberty, rescued the temporal institutions from religious interference. On the other hand, it has secured religious liberty from the invasion of the civil liberty.”

No other construction should attach to this particular provision of our Constitution, regardless of the difference in the relative positions of the Church and State

in the two countries at the respective times of the adoption of their Constitutions. In other words, the same reason for protecting a minority religion from the interference of a powerful State should also apply for the protection of the State against interference from a powerful church to which the great majority of the national population belongs.²⁰

²⁰ The Evil of "Religious Test" in Our Democracy, February 19, 1960.

PART FIVE

THE CONSTITUTION

I believe, in all humility, that the Constitution of 1935 was a good Constitution, that it was as perfect as any human institution can hope to be perfect. Enforced, obeyed, and interpreted, in the pristine spirit in which it was adopted and promulgated, by a people dedicated to the ideal of self-government and human freedom which they had so long pursued and saw at last within their grasp, the Constitution of 1935 could be an inviolable sanctuary for our rights and liberties.

But it has not been so enforced, obeyed, and interpreted. Its best intentions have been perverted, its balanced machinery upset, its mandates defied and ignored, its most basic guarantees violated by men who have interpreted it in the false light of their own political convenience.

We could not reasonably foresee that the very men charged with upholding and defending the Constitution would be the very first to violate and prostitute it.¹

¹ Our Constitutional Crisis, February 16, 1952.

Constitutional Safeguards

The Constitution, as we wrote it, sought to provide for future contingencies, to guard against human ambition, to make allowances for human frailty, to balance rights with obligations, and freedom with authority, and to place careful limitations both on the exercise of the powers of government and on the enjoyment of civil liberties in the interest of the commonweal and for the safety and preservation of the state.²

Safeguarding The Constitution

The Constitution, through which all good things in our democracy came into being, and without which they could not have come to be, is the light of our nation; but this light cannot illumine those in the darkness who neither understand it nor love it, because men of little faith, Pharisees and money-changers, a generation of vipers, in the angry words of the Lord, have hidden it under the bushel of their hypocrisy and greed.

Let us then bear witness to the Constitution so that, in the language of the Gospels, all the people may learn to believe. If our nation is to survive and attain greatness in freedom, the Constitution must live in our actions, both as individuals and as a people, in the enlightened conviction and the steadfast belief that only in the spirit of the Constitution, made flesh among us, shall democracy abide with us and our nation forever enjoy the blessings of independence under a regime of justice and liberty.

But neither in the toils of the day nor in the vigils of the night can the sentinels of the Constitution relax their vigilance. Let us, therefore, all be wary and stand upon our arms, lest, by culpable tolerance or by criminal negligence, our country should in some desolate future

² Ibid.

become a desert of liberty, wherein only the massive ruins of our republic shall remain, magnificent but tragic monuments of the past, in whose desecrated labyrinths our descendants, by then the forlorn bondsmen of some corrupt despot, shall in vain endeavor to decipher the language of the Constitution inscribed, as in forgotten hieroglyphs, on the sarcophagus of our lost freedoms.³

*Our Future As A Democratic Nation Depends On
How We Uphold The Constitution*

The free and ordered life of our nation depends upon the preservation of the Constitution. Without its orderly processes and guarantees, its discerning allocation of governmental authority, and its calculated system of checks and balances, it would be difficult, not to say impossible, for our people to choose a truly representative government, or having chosen it and entrusted it with power, to protect themselves from its deterioration into an irresponsible and tyrannical oligarchy.

And yet our Constitution, or any constitution for that matter, does not and cannot work miracles. Its lofty declaration of principles, its wise commands and injunctions, are not the open sesame to all the promised treasures of a republican regime, nor a magic formula which by mere fiat will restore youth and vigor to a decrepit polity. It is an instrument, noble, it is true, in its origin and purpose, but a very human thing, and it can only attain validity and dynamism with popular consciousness, faith, and militancy.⁴

* * * *

... a Constitution is only as good as the men who enforce it, and the men who obey it and respect it. We may embody in a new Constitution the lessons we have

³ The Future of the Constitution, February 8, 1953.

⁴ Ibid.

learned, in peace and in war, from contemporary rackets, shady deals, administrative inefficiency and scandals, vacillating and temporising tribunals, communist subversion, and open rebellion. We may foresee all that can be reasonably foreseen. And we may have as a result a theoretically perfect instrument to promote the general welfare.

But if the men entrusted with the enforcement of the Constitution are the first to violate it, to ignore it, and to evade it, if the men who have taken public office, swearing on the Constitution, are the first to call it a scrap of paper to avoid its injunctions and disobey its mandates, then no Constitution can work.

And if we the people permit such men to remain in power, fear to denounce them, compromise with their misdeeds, and perhaps even profit from their violations, then we are a people that do not deserve a Constitution.

The life of any Constitution is the love of freedom in the people it serves. A people like the Russian masses may have what is theoretically the best Constitution in the world, but it will avail them nothing if they submit to a tyranny that makes such a Constitution a mockery and a fraud. On the other hand, a people like the English may not have a written Constitution at all; they may theoretically depend upon the shifting judgment of their Parliament on what their constitutional traditions are; but their freedoms are safe and inviolate because they know the worth of those freedoms and guard them with their lives.

We must aspire to build our democracy upon such a pattern, for it is not for nothing that the English have the best and oldest democracy in the world. We must learn to make democracy more than a word, a slogan, a fetish, and to look upon it as a dynamic thing, a practical busi-

ness, not only something to live with, but also something we must live in, and live by, and live for, something that must work for the welfare of our people if it is to mean anything.⁵

* * * *

We are the Constitution in the sense that it can live only in us, through us, for us, and because of us. The best amendment to the Constitution would be the amendment of our lives, the amendment of our attitudes, outlook, and actions, the realization that we are free men, and the resolution to live and act as free men.

Let us so live and act that our lives and deeds will be the safest stronghold against the abuse of tyrants, the schemes of the ambitious, and the cupidity of the corrupt. Only thus can we have a Constitution worthy of our great libertarian patrimony and the heroic ancestors who founded it, for us to preserve it and protect it, for us to enjoy in perpetuity its incomparable blessings.⁶

* * * *

When the balance of power which is the soul of democracy is destroyed, the outward forms of democracy become meaningless. When President and Congress, joining the power of appointment with the power of confirmation, the power of legislation with the power of enforcement, the power to declare a policy with the power to carry it out, the power to raise money with the power to disburse it, conspire in the interest of total power by one man or one party, then democracy is in peril of its life.

No matter what the Constitution may say, such a joint power can exert well-nigh irresistible pressure on the courts, wear out the rights of the people through the erosion of repeated encroachments, or carry them away

⁵ Our Constitutional Crisis, February 16, 1952.

⁶ The Challenge of the Unforeseen, February 9, 1952.

in a bold sweep against which redress shall no longer be found within the framework of the Constitution.

And who shall rise to defend the Bill of Rights, who shall rise to fight for the supremacy of the Constitution, and how can those who may do so expect the support of the majority of the people, when the people, by then, shall have been inured to the repeated spectacle of the Constitution violated, the Constitution defied, the Constitution desecrated and contemned?⁷

* * * *

The obligation to uphold and defend the Constitution is, I should repeat, even more pressing on those who enjoy the powers and privileges it has provided. They are creatures of the Constitution. They are sworn to protect, obey, and defend it. And, by the very nature of their office, by the authority which invests their pronouncements and their actions, they are the better placed to shape the mind of the people and influence their will and course of conduct.

It is incumbent upon our judges to interpret and apply the Constitution, finding its true spirit in and between the faltering language of its human authors.

It is our manifest fortune as a democracy that we have been endowed with learned and upright judges throughout our modern history, from the days of the Arellanos and Mapas and Araullos, to the present; judges like those of Israel, whose verdicts were not only testimonies of the truth but lessons and examples to their people in the face of tyrants. The popular faith in the courts, by and large, remains unshaken, something which can hardly be said of the other two departments of the government.

⁷ The Future of the Constitution, February 8, 1953.

But the Constitution, after all, is political law, and democracy is a political system, and it is inevitable that both the Constitution and democracy should be the particular concern of the two political departments of the government. They it is that are called upon to lead in the preservation of the system of government we have rightly chosen, by showing in words and deeds that it can succeed, and succeed more fully than any other system, in any conceivable situation, for any legitimate objective.⁸

A Realistic View Of The Constitution

... the Constitution is not, and should not be, an idol under strict taboos. It is not, and should not be, a strait-jacket for the growing and developing nation which it was made to serve. The Constitution itself outlines the procedure for its own amendment, and is thus expressly devoted to the principle that it is neither inviolable nor permanent, but a working instrument to secure the general welfare of the people.

In truth, actual events "tamper" with the Constitution much more than persons or parties. History reveals its defects and dangers. I believe we can do better service to the Constitution by remedying its defects and meeting the criticisms against it, than by closing our eyes to them in blind idolatry.⁹

* * * *

The abolition of the single term for the President of the Philippines to maintain the late President Quezon at the helm of the ship of state, has, in our days, given us presidents more intent on promoting their reelection than the best interests of the people.

The abolition of the unicameral National Assembly, on the other hand, and its substitution with a bicameral

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ The Constitution and the Problem of Peace and Order, March 29, 1952.

Congress intended to provide a so-called school for national leaders in a Senate elected at large, has given us, not new national leaders but impostors who presume to represent the entire country when they could not be elected probably even to the municipal council in their own native towns.

But if these amendments of 1940 were bad, that is only all the more reason to get rid of them now. And if these amendments, proposed by a subservient National Assembly to please an imperious leader, were ill-advised, that is only all the more reason to place the task of re-examining the Constitution in the hands of a Convention, as in 1934.¹⁰

The Invincibility Of The Constitution

The Constitution of our Republic has known many enemies. It has felt the mailed fist of the invader, the torch of rebellion, the corruption of imperialism, the criminal assaults of its very sworn defenders and protectors. But I believe I do not exaggerate when I say that it has survived the most sinister and deadly of all its dangers, the danger of its own suicide. For in the famous test cases whose decision¹¹ we celebrate today, it was pretended that the Constitution could be nullified by the Constitution itself, that the provisions of the Constitution were at war with one another so that an apparently constitutional power and prerogative could be used and abused to destroy the entire structure of our democracy. Fortunately for the Republic, the highest court of the land has repudiated this juridical heresy, this preposterous theory of constitutional suicide. Fortunately for our people, it has been solemnly proclaimed and declared, for all who

¹⁰ Commencement Address, Luzonian Colleges, Lucena, April 24, 1951.

¹¹ The Supreme Court decisions on the emergency powers exercised by President Quirino.

love democracy to hear and understand, that the will of one man, no matter how exalted his position as the chief magistrate of the nation, can not prevail against the Constitution.¹²

* * * *

... God save the Constitution from personal ambition and partisan corruption. God save the Constitution from the inroads of imperialism and all forms and brands of totalitarianism. I give you the Constitution, that sacred "scrap of paper" which is the embodiment of the fondest hopes, the noblest ideals, the most cherished rights, and the inalienable freedoms of the Filipino people, the sacred scrap of paper which like another sacred scrap of paper, the ballot of every free citizen of this Republic, is our inviolable stronghold against tyranny and oppression, the impregnable bulwark of justice, freedom, and liberty, and the guarantee of our democracy and our victory!

Long live the Constitution!¹³

¹² The Triumph of the Constitution, September 24, 1949.

¹³ Ibid.

PART SIX

PHILIPPINE POLITICS

A nation's political, economic, and cultural life is of its people's own making. Of course there are what we call the forces of history, but it is for the people, in the present advanced state of civilization, to channel them toward the realization of national objectives. We must accept, therefore, full responsibility for the backward condition of our economy, for our political immaturity and pomposness, for our opportunistic mentality, for our predilection for dramatizing minor issues to the neglect of long-range, basic questions, and for our confusions and indecisions that have delayed for decades the progress of the nation.¹

¹ Our Political Parties Before the Bar of History, April 17, 1960.

An Appraisal Of Our Political Parties

It is to be deplored that our major political parties were born and nurtured before we had attained the status of a free democracy. The result was that they have come to be caricatures of their foreign model with its known characteristics — patronage, division of spoils, political bossism, partisan treatment of vital national issues. I say caricatures because of their chronic shortsightedness respecting those ultimate objectives the attainment of which was essential to a true and lasting national independence. All throughout the period of American colonization, they allowed themselves to become more and more the tools of colonial rule and less and less the interpreters of the people's will and ideals. Through their complacency, the new colonizer was able to fashion, in exchange for sufferance of oratorical complaints for independence, and for patronage, rank, and sinecure, a regime of his own choosing, for his own aims, and in his own self-interest.²

A Description Of Philippine Political Life

We have not acquired our political education from school. Of course many of us graduated in political science and political law, but I do not mean that kind of political education. Ours is essentially pragmatic and a very simple one, too. It boils down to opportunism through public office which may be sought either at the polls or by dispensation and patronage. In the first case, the choice is broad: from President of the Republic to municipal mayor or barrio lieutenant, and from senator to municipal councilor. In the second case the patronage is also large: from cabinet member to office messenger or street-sweeper, and from two-star general to buck pri-

² Ibid.

vate. All the political offices I have mentioned are the *open sesame* to wealth and influence. I speak in general terms and no hard and fast pronouncement is intended, there being, of course, honorable exceptions which are, however, few and far between. It is because of this political education that we have a vast clerical proletariat on one hand and, on the other, the elite of officials who, after several years of holding office, elective or appointive, have been able to build from nothing handsome fortunes of varying magnitudes depending on the opportunities afforded by the offices they held. Obviously enough, influence peddlers need not hold any government position; in fact some have resigned the ones they held, even positions with distinction, because they needed a wider field of operation. What is important for the influence peddler is what is known as having the right connections, whether by consanguinity or affinity, or by paramountcy in quantitative politics, the connection with the ultimate source of dispensation. As to the political followers of no moment, they are kept contented with the crumbs. There are murmurings and grumblings all around, but that is as far as the Filipinos go. They are benevolent, patient, stoical, fatalistic. They leave everything to heaven.³

* * * *

Just before the outbreak of the Second World War, our leaders realized the deleterious effects of continued economic dependence on the United States, and they recoiled in horror, but, strangely enough, the only solution they thought possible was the continuance of preferential trade agreements over a period of readjustment. It was a solution that merely complicated and aggravated the problem. It only postponed the impending disaster. Years of dealing with petty matters, of squabbling over the

³ The Philippines at the Crossroads, April 11, 1958.

spoils of office, and of big talk while picking up crumbs from the American table, had so sapped the strength and courage and so dimmed the vision of our leaders that they became incapable of opening a new path which would lead the nation to real political freedom through economic emancipation from alien control.⁴

The Gravest Sin Of Philippine Political Parties

But the gravest sin of Philippine politicking was the gross neglect to exert efforts towards economic emancipation. So obsessed were the politicians with their power struggles and the doling out of the spoils of office that, either they did not foresee, or having foreseen, they completely neglected the economic problems of independence. Politics, with its enlivened election campaigns and its dispensation of patronage, became a national sport which distracted and amused the people, in the same manner that bread and circuses distracted and amused the Roman populace, which did not mind whether it was Nero or Cincinnatus, or Caligula or Marcus Aurelius, who was their Caesar. In our case, while the more fortunate of us were living in comfort and luxury with the fat proceeds of our privileged agricultural exports and the holding of high government positions, the nation was slowly being consigned to perpetual economic slavery.

Had our leaders been from the beginning more far-sighted, and had they prepared the people for the responsibilities of independence, in the same manner that a true Christian is trained to stand ready at every hour for his final accounting because death comes as a thief in the night, our sovereignty and independence would now be real and complete and, on the other hand, our leaders would not have exposed themselves to the charge that they

⁴ Our Political Parties Before the Bar of History, April 17, 1960.

did not sincerely desire independence, that their outcries and agitations for it were just intended for political effect, and that their sole aim was to win and retain the monopoly of power with its accompanying privileges.⁵

The Need For Nationalistic Public Officials

We must learn, as a people, to accept reality to guide our decisions. We must learn, as a self-governing nation, to choose and appraise our leaders by their real worth, by what they are and what they have done, and not by what they say they are or what they claim to have done.

Any other course is fraught with danger for our democracy. It is only one short step from fraud to force, from naivete to serfdom.⁶

* * * *

We have tried many types of leaders — economists, economic mobilizers, men of the masses — but in every case the program presented by each and all of them carried the same unmistakable stamp of colonialism. The result has been that our problems have grown more and more serious. We need, therefore, an economic program with a new orientation. Such a program can be none other than a nationalistic one, oriented toward the transformation of our present colonial economy into one which will serve, primarily, the interest of the Filipino.⁷

* * * *

We have become engaged in a great national contest of pro-Americanism, to the extent that a tradition is being built up that a candidate for the Chief Magistracy of this sovereign Republic must somehow or other, if he is to insure his victory, secure the blessings of the White House and the support of the local American community,

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The Quirino Junket — An Objective Appraisal, September 4, 1949.

⁷ Filipinism and the Coming Elections, August 10, 1957.

as if we were some Soviet satellite whose prime minister is named by the Russian Ambassador and the local Communist party. Every day on every hand, we find many of our own people in the highest places obsessed by the question of what the Americans will think or say about this, or do about that, as if American interests and American public opinion were the only things that mattered, and the only standards to be followed, in the management of our own affairs.

Let us rid ourselves of this insidious servility that does no good, and gives no credit, either to the Philippines or to the United States.⁸

* * * *

The need for an intellectual rebirth among our people becomes apparent if we observe the contrast between the attitude of the Filipino electorate from 1907 to 1922, and the present. In those days, candidates charged with being pro-American were doomed. Today, all the national parties, except our own,⁹ take pride in proclaiming that they are supported by America. What has become of their sense of values? Do the sacred names of Bonifacio, Rizal, Mabini, Del Pilar, and Quezon, and what they stood for, no longer mean anything to them?¹⁰

* * * *

It is about time that we change our prospects and our actual conditions of life by supporting and elevating to high positions of leadership men and women with true nationalistic spirit, not in the chauvinistic sense but in the practical and realistic one of upholding the prerogatives of Philippine sovereignty and defending the rights of priority of the Filipinos in every economic field, particularly in the enjoyment of the nation's natural re-

⁸ Our Lingering Colonial Complex, June 24, 1951.

⁹ The Nationalist Citizens Party

¹⁰ The Men of 1896, September 16, 1957.

sources. It is only by electing officials who are sworn to protect and defend our supreme national interests that we can look with faith and confidence to the future.¹¹

* * * *

The striking thing about the campaign of these self-styled saviours of the nation is that no one has alluded to the colonial structure of our economy. From their silence we can only conclude that, if placed in high office, they would maintain the existing colonial pattern of our economy as long as they personally profit by it. For reasons known only to them, they even make it a point not to touch upon vital questions affecting our sovereignty, such as the Republic's jurisdiction over foreign military personnel in and out of the American bases in the Philippines. They are equally silent on such clearly harmful practices as the dumping here of foreign surplus commodities, like Virginia leaf tobacco, corn, wheat flour, etc., which not only wrecks the local price structure but depresses the initiative of our producers and discourages our rising industrialists.

But these are but minor evils of the colonial character of our economic relations. More fundamental is our raw-material export economy to which we have been chained up to the present but which our would-be saviours are reluctant even to discuss in public. Their unwillingness to do so is understandable.

Candidates who are themselves big producers and exporters of raw materials cannot, of course, be expected to work for a change in the pattern of the economy from which they make their millions, even if this pattern has proved inadequate to create jobs and to bring down the high cost of living. Neither can we expect professional politicians to dedicate themselves to the difficult task of

¹¹ Filipinism and the Coming Elections, August 10, 1957.

working out a sound economic program, when they are too feverishly concerned with dispensing patronage and contingent funds to retain power for the gratification of their personal ambitions.

As to the poseurs, one wonders what intellectual honesty and patriotic integrity it is that they claim to possess when they persist in deluding the common people into believing that their youth and self-serving and unproved statements of honesty and integrity are all that is necessary to solve our problems of mass poverty, unemployment, and high cost of living.¹²

* * * *

The longer we delay a bold reappraisal of our political and economic situation, the graver and more puzzling our problems will become. Unfortunately, those most eager to wear the mantle of authority do not intend to make such an appraisal. They are satisfied with some semblance of independence and look upon our basic subservience to foreign control as a perfectly desirable arrangement. From this point of view, they do not differ from each other, and you cannot distinguish which is the ruling party and which is the opposition. Enjoyment of power to satisfy the greed of their leaders and votaries is their common denominator.¹³

* * * *

I believe, as I have always believed, that the issue of American interference cannot arise if and when we have a government truly elected by our people and truly dedicated to their welfare. With such a government, the United States would have neither motive nor excuse nor opportunity to interfere. I shall not quarrel about party affiliations, such a government could be Liberal or Na-

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

cionalista; but so long as it had the confidence of the people and the will to serve the people, it would know how to preserve its independence and gain the respect, not only of the United States but of the whole world. That is the kind of government you and I have been struggling for; that is the kind of government that every true Filipino nationalist must seek to put in power.¹⁴

Corruption In Public Office

Power accumulates power. The corrupt will grow more corrupt with each passing year; the unscrupulous will grow more ruthless; ambition will never be satiated; and it will be harder and harder to overthrow an administration growing more and more entrenched in privilege, patronage, and power, until in the end we may face the terrible choice of slavery or revolution.¹⁵

* * * *

How many corsairs, disguised as public servants, cruise the troubled waters of our society, with a letter of marque of patriotism! How many have launched themselves into an undertaking and returned loaded with precious booty! How many, like Columbus, have embarked on a voyage possessed of nothing more than their fancies, yet returned bringing with them a new world.¹⁶

* * * *

Juvenile delinquency, although an alarming national problem, with which the authorities and the religious and civic organizations apparently cannot cope, is less terrifying than adult delinquency, and by this I do not allude to the common criminals but to the malfeasors in office, the betrayers of public trust and their confederates, accomplices, and accessories-after-the-fact like the influence

¹⁴ The Americans and the Next Elections, April 8, 1953.

¹⁵ How Our People Shall Choose, November, 1949.

¹⁶ Cayetano S. Arellano (Funeral Oration), January 10, 1921.

peddlers and the beneficiaries of all these racketeerings of horrendous proportions. And they are untouchable because they are powerful, because wealth and authority lend prestige and respectability to successful culprits whom common mortals look up to with trepidation, if not in awe. As Rizal said in a sarcastic tone: "Hagase bien el crimen y sera admirado y tendra mas partidarios que los actos virtuosos llevados a cabo con modestia y timidez."

We have it from the Gospel that, with the thirty pieces of silver received by Judas from the chief priests and elders as the price of Jesus' betrayal, a field was bought to be used as burial place for strangers; the field was called Haceldama, which means Field of Blood, because it was acquired with the money paid Judas for "betraying the blood of an innocent man." God forbid that the time should ever come when the entire Philippines shall become a huge Haceldama, a vast Field of Blood, the blood of the nation, for the burial, not of strangers but of our own people who have been betrayed by the chief priests and elders and Iscariots, that is, the ruling classes of the country and their associates, at the price not of thirty pieces of silver but of millions and billions in graft and corruption.¹⁷

The Causal Connection Between Corruption In Government And A Colonial Economy

With the government as the main employer and with economic conditions as backward as those of any other agricultural-colonial country, the efforts of the people to insure their livelihood were principally directed to securing government jobs. The limitation of opportunities outside the official world made centralization inevitable and the government omnipotent. This was the corrupting in-

¹⁷ The Philippines at the Crossroads, April 11, 1958.

fluence which impelled the astute and the ambitious to use politics as an instrument for personal advancement in the social, official, and economic spheres. Patronage and centralization became, therefore, the twin products of that peculiar colonial situation which seemed to fit the designs and wishes of both parties.¹⁸

* * * *

A cursory research into contemporary history will show that the incidence of government corruption seems to be higher in underdeveloped countries than in developed ones with better-balanced economies. This should mean, therefore, that the economy of a country must have some causal connection with corruption in its government. No doubt there are other contributing factors, but in the end it will be found that, remote as it may at first glance appear, an unbalanced economy is at the root of it all.

But I must say right here and now that we can never hope to improve our economy and thus remove one of the contributory factors of government corruption as long as we retain the colonial pattern of such economy, and we may well expect it to remain colonial as long as we elect colonial-minded men to positions of leadership.¹⁹

* * * *

Aliens have no right to tell the members of this Congress what laws they should or should not approve, or to tell the President what policies he should follow or disregard, or to tell the members of his cabinet how to run their respective Departments, and they certainly have no right to tell our people what candidates for public office they should elect or reject. Only Filipino citizens can participate in our processes of self-government, if we are to have real self-government, and our laws provide for the

¹⁸ Our Political Parties Before the Bar of History, April 17, 1960.

¹⁹ Filipinism and the Coming Elections, August 10, 1957.

punishment of aliens who attempt to arrogate to themselves the political rights of citizens, or to influence their exercise.

But it is, I believe, an entirely different matter to deprive aliens of their legitimate rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The Constitution draws no distinction between citizen and alien in this regard, and declares that no law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech or of the press.²⁰

* * * *

One of the causes, certainly, of lack of integrity in public administration here is the circumstance of many desirable products of a highly industrialized culture being easily available in the Philippines despite the country's underdeveloped, agrarian condition. Thus, many are tempted to consume beyond their normal means, and there is a terrific pressure upon those so tempted to make money quickly the easy way, and often regardless of the means, including dishonest or immoral means.²¹

The Temptations Of Public Office

At heart, the problem of loyalty is one of self-respect, and this perhaps was the thought of Shakespeare when he bade every man be true to himself. Temptations will always arise for the man in public life to violate his oath of office, his obligations of public trust, and his duties to the people whom he represents and serves. Times will come when he will tell himself that he can safely increase his fortune or advance his career by betrayal because he is clever enough to get away with it. But even if, contrary to Lincoln's belief, he can succeed in fooling all of the peo-

²⁰ On the Proposal to Make Libel Against the President, Vice-President and the Members of Congress a Ground for Automatic Deportation of Aliens, Philippine Senate, October 3, 1959.

²¹ Industrialism and Economic Nationalism, October 3, 1959.

ple all of the time, he cannot fool himself, and if he respects himself, he will be unable to live with his own conscience.²²

* * * *

... It is melancholy to feel that our rulers and leaders can no longer be depended upon. They are a lost and confused lot; their conscience is laden with guilt and their minds with avarice, and their hearts are devoid of compunction. They are the "social cancer" in this "reign of greed."²³

Executive Influence Over The Judiciary

It has been our demoralizing experience that administrative supervision over the courts by a governmental power other than the judicial has opened the way for actual control of their decisions. Special judges have been assigned to try specific cases in order to secure certain desired results. Judges who have displeased the administration with their decisions, or even by the dignity of their demeanor, have been transferred, ignored in promotions, or otherwise punished in many a subtle way. On the other hand, judges who have known how to anticipate the wishes of the administration have been rewarded in the same manner. The Secretary of Justice has thus become a judge of judges, and we must admit that the possibility of abuse, already inherent in the system itself, is aggravated even more when the position is occupied by a man who does not feel restrained by conscience and those moral habits and rules of decorum which should govern the conduct of public officials.

Independence, in this as in other fields, is indivisible. The courts cannot be independent in their decisions when

²² The Problem of Loyalty, March 30, 1952.

²³ The Philippines at the Crossroads, April 11, 1958.

they are dependent for their administration and supervision on another power. They must be wholly independent or they will not be independent at all.

That is, for me, the basic consideration in judicial reform, and I have therefore viewed with approval the various proposals for the transfer of supervision over the courts from the Secretary of Justice to the Supreme Court.²⁴

* * * *

The fear has been expressed that the administrative autonomy of the entire judicial power would lead to the Supreme Court's becoming an oligarchy. This fear seems unfounded. If we have heretofore allowed the Executive to exercise, through his Secretary of Justice, administrative supervision over inferior courts, why should we now fear the exercise of the same powers by the Supreme Court whose members, by the very nature of their positions, their judicial training, the manner of their selection and the security of their tenure, should be immune from those urges and temptations to which politicians are prey?

Judicial independence is a principle consecrated by the Constitution, but the Executive may, by his administrative power over the inferior courts, disturb and jeopardize such independence.

Because of political pressure on the inferior courts, justice has often been scandalously delayed and denied, and crimes have gone unpunished. In countries like Britain and Canada, an accused person can expect to be tried expeditiously and either acquitted or convicted in a matter of weeks, whereas in our country trials drag on for years and, as a result, many actually escape punishment

²⁴ The Judiciary, A Separate, Independent Power Under the Constitution, December 28, 1953.

because documentary evidence may have meanwhile been destroyed or lost, and witnesses may have died or been bribed into silence or recantation. More often than not, such delay swings the scales of justice in the wrong direction.

Our system of prosecution, it seems to me, can best be improved through better organization and training under a single official, a Secretary of Justice or an Attorney-General who does not exercise administrative supervision over the courts. Let this official, through his fiscals and solicitors, prosecute whom he will and, if he does not control the inferior courts, untrammelled justice can be expected, because his errors can be exposed and corrected, and every litigant will have his day in court. Such check and balance is the very reason for separating the functions of the Judiciary from those of the Executive under the Constitution.²⁵

* * * *

The supervision of these Courts by the Supreme Court is a task surely of no less importance than the actual adjudication of controversies on appeal. Indeed there might be less appeals, and less decisions to reverse or modify, if the judges of the lower courts enjoyed complete independence from executive control.

Moreover, the Supreme Court should also have the power to recommend the persons from whom the President can select for appointment to the bench. In this way, we can hope to have a body of judges such as the framers of the Constitution had hoped for: an independent, able, efficient, incorruptible judiciary dispensing swift and impartial justice. Special Domestic Relations and Pro-

²⁵ The Reform of Our Judicial System, May 21, 1960

bate Courts should be erected in every first class province to be presided over by women judges.²⁶

On The Favorite Quotations Of Politicians Nowadays:

(a) *"I prefer a government run like hell by Filipinos to a government run like heaven by foreigners."*

A certain columnist took exception to Quezon's injunction which has become classic: I would rather have a government run like hell by Filipinos than a government run like heaven by foreigners. The columnist said he believed in independence, but, he added, not at that price. This attitude shows the need for a reorientation even among some intellectuals. Quezon of course was merely being dramatic, as he was wont to be, in his exhortation for nationalism and employed this now famous dictum to achieve that effect. No doubt his use of the words "heaven" and "hell" was quite an exaggeration, which accounts for the columnist's disapproval of his proposition. But taking the dramatic words "hell" and "heaven" for what they were intended — hyperboles — can anyone in conscience disagree with Quezon? A government run by foreigners can never be for the benefit of anyone but theirs. That is what Quezon's dictum meant: that a government by foreigners can never be for the people.²⁷

* * * *

(b) *"My loyalty to my party ends where my loyalty to my country begins."*

I have never been a believer in the logic of this statement which was originally attributed to a leading figure of the French Revolution during the reign of terror. It assumes that loyalty to party and loyalty to country are

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ The Men of 1896, September 16, 1957.

irreconcilable. It assumes that one cannot be loyal to his country without first betraying his party, and that when one betrays his party, he is automatically and by that very token being loyal to his country.

The truth is that political parties exist as instrumentalities recognized by the Constitution for the service of the country, and unless the principles they advocate and the practices they observe are obnoxious to the commonweal, loyalty to the party to which one belongs, and under whose banner one has presented himself before the electorate, and to whose support one owes his political victories, is just as desirable and honorable as loyalty to one's own country.

Political parties still have a definitely useful service to perform in our democratic system. If we are to continue with our present form of government, which is basically a contest between political parties for the majority support of their particular programs for the good of the entire country, then we must admit the legitimacy, the desirability, and even the necessity of party loyalty.

Otherwise we shall be at the mercy of the cynical, the faithless, the corrupt, and the unprincipled, who, for the sake of personal advantage, will never hesitate to change parties, which is to say, to change ideals, objectives, and principles. We shall have men running for office and being elected on a platform, let us say, of clean and honest government, only to brazenly repudiate, once in office, their campaign pledges, and even to join the ranks of those whom they had virulently attacked. If party platforms and party organizations are indeed useless and meaningless, then we should admit at long last that perhaps those who advocate the abolition of all political parties and the implantation here of that new Utopia known as partyless democracy, are right.

The basic fallacy of the apologists for political turn-coats is that they assume that party loyalty and loyalty to the country are antagonistic, or at least fundamentally different, in the sense that one begins where the other ends. On the contrary, party loyalty and loyalty to country can be, and often are, parallel. They co-exist, in the logical relationship of means and end, and indeed they often mutually assist and bolster each other. I speak, of course, of democratic parties which operate within the framework of popular government for the general welfare. I speak not of the Communist party which is so fundamentally at odds with our democratic system that it must, by definition, be subversive. Nor do I speak of party corruption and excesses. Certainly, when a party is guilty of sacking the public treasury, of conniving with graft and corruption, and of practising fraud and terrorism to frustrate the will of the electorate, loyalty to that party is not only incompatible with loyalty to, but an outright betrayal of, the country and the people.

As a general rule, however, loyalty to party is loyalty to principles because a party, if it deserves that name, is an association of men dedicated to the same principles in the government of the country for the general welfare. To betray one's party, therefore, is to abandon one's principles, and, when a man has been elected as a member of a political party to achieve and advance the objectives of that party, the betrayal of the party is the betrayal of the electorate. It is no less than a gigantic *estafa* perpetrated on the people.²⁸

Recto, The Oppositionist

I am not one to decry conflicts when they are derived from honest differences of opinion. It is good, within

²⁸ The Problem of Loyalty, March 30, 1952.

limits, that we should disagree. There are less chances that the people will be robbed and swindled of their rights when their agents and trustees are mutually jealous and vigilant. Democracy presupposes such conflicts and differences; only tyranny can impose an artificial unanimity of thought and action.²⁹

* * * *

I have tried my best to study international power politics and the motives, especially the economic, in the service of such force, as well as the problems and the needs of underdeveloped nations, particularly our own, so I could better explain the real purpose and direction of the policies that others follow towards our own people.

For so doing I have been called a systematic and persistent oppositionist. From one who feels he has, after years of study, learned the basic truths of political and economic life, persistent opposition to wrong policies is to be expected. They branded my opposition as systematic. If so, it is because I have had to keep pace with the systematic regularity and frequency with which this administration has been advocating wrong or bad policies, whether political, social, or economic.

But I must deny that I am an oppositionist for the sake of opposition. I am always alert about complexes, and any man who is conscious of complexes can never develop or maintain them. Let my arguments and my actions be scrutinized as closely as one would wish, and no one will find any instance where any opposition of mine has not been based on a conscientious and thorough study of the policy I came to oppose. During the last six

²⁹ The Future of the Constitution, February 8, 1953.

years, I have had but one theme in my opposition: a call for dynamic nationalism. That during this period my opposition has been most frequent should surprise no one. It was the period when imperialism was strongest, most expansive, and least understanding of the feelings of weaker nations. It is no mere coincidence that it was during this very same period when the United States, by admission of her own leaders, suffered the greatest loss of prestige in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

As long, therefore, as those in positions of lawful authority permit themselves to follow and adopt policies that are inimical to our national independence, so long will my persistent, "systematic" opposition continue. But as soon as those inimical policies are abandoned, my opposition will cease. Indeed, I shall be only too glad to cooperate in the implementation of new policies intended to enhance the freedom, the dignity, the prosperity, and the happiness of our people, rather than the profits and the privileges of others.³⁰

Recto, The Oppositionist, A Direct Descendant Of Our Heroes

After all, the great heroes of our heroic past have been oppositionists: Rizal, Plaridel, Bonifacio, Mabini, Luna, to mention only a few. It may be countered that they opposed a foreign regime. That is exactly what I am doing in my own humble way: opposing a foreign regime which functions and operates in this Republic through willing or complacent countrymen who pride themselves in their roles of marionettes.³¹

* * * *

³⁰ Sovereignty and Nationalism, November 6, 1955

³¹ The Election Issue of "Anti-Americanism" in the 4th Senatorial District in 1921, July 28, 1955.

The crusade that the Nationalist-Citizens Party has launched is, at bottom, a crusade in the spirit of 1896. It is a crusade for Filipino nationalism, which means full sovereignty, complete independence, complete separation, as a national entity, from any other national entity; in other words, complete freedom to determine and adopt national policies and to fashion our nation's destiny.³²

³² The Men of 1896, September 16, 1957.

They are eternal words. Since
they were uttered, they have
resounded and will resound in
our conscience like the
lamentations of the prophet,
so that we may learn to protect
ourselves against the cruelties
of despotism, and against
insatiable greed, lust for power,
and the cunning of imposture;
redeeming words which will
always serve as the people's
shield against all apostasies,
against all deceits, against all
cowardly capitulations.

Deathless Words¹
June 19, 1957

¹ This is a quotation from a speech entitled "Deathless Words." Recto was extolling Rizal's message in the novel, *El Filibusterismo*, but these same words could very well apply to Recto's own message to the Filipino people contained in this volume.



